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The European Film Maker in Exile in Britain 1933-1945

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Preface

This is the first study of the émigré filmmaker in Britain and considers the ways in which their varying contributions to British cinema have been received and understood. There are already a number of books which deal the European exiles in Hollywood and numerous biographies and autobiographies of film personalities who had successful careers in America. Similarly, there is a wide appreciation of their contribution to the development of the motion picture industry. British film history has ignored the impact and the influence of the European filmmaker. Rachael Low's general history of British film² mentions many of their names but assumes that they are of peripheral interest in its development, there are two biographies and a few articles on Alexander Korda,³ but little else. The enthusiast or student of British cinema might be forgiven for believing that there was no European influence on the technical and artistic development of its national cinema. In 1958, the leading British film publication *Sight and Sound* included Henry Cornelius in an index to British film directors⁴ without mentioning that he had been born in Berlin. Rachael Low comments that threat of quota legislation at the end of the 1920s led, in substantial part, to the restructuring of the British film industry whilst attracting foreign as well as British

1 John Baxter, *The Hollywood Exiles*, London, 1976; John Russell Taylor, *Strangers in Paradise*, London, 1983; Otto Friedrich, *City of Nets*, London, 1986 amongst them.

2 Rachael Low, *The History of the British Film 1918-29*, London, 1971; *Film Making*, London, 1985.

3 Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London 1959; Karol Kulik *Alexander Korda*, London 1975. Sarah Street, 'Alexander Korda', *Historical Journal*, Vol.6 No.2, (1986) is among the most important articles.

4 *S&S*, Autumn, 1958. Henry Cornelius = Heinz Cornelius. It does, however, give some details of his early career in Berlin. Cornelius is sometimes mistakenly thought to have been born in South Africa.

talent to its modernized studios.¹ She writes somewhat contemptuously, that the ‘biggest company of the twenties, BIP, was a conspicuous example of the new type of large company based on a belief that if production facilities were provided in abundance the talent would be attracted to them. ‘Its large and well equipped studios at Elstree were soon peopled with film makers of varying ability from all over the world, including some of the best from other British companies’.²

The impression of large British studios, well equipped and acting as a magnet to world talent is one of the many illusions of the history of British cinema. As we shall see British studios were lilliputian. BIP’s studio at Elstree, may have been large and well equipped relative to other British studios, but it was objectively small. By the mid-1930’s it was only the fourth biggest operating studio in Britain. With less than 600 000 sq. ft. of production stages, it was half the size of Denham. Even a casual examination of any of the films produced at BIP, Elstree during this period shows how small the sound stages actually were. British film production companies at the beginning of the 1930s were, for the most part, cottage industries. Studios were small, certainly nothing to compare with the UFA studios Neubabelsberg or the Emelka studios at Geiseltal. Helmut Junge, in his analysis of the British film industry, compares the sizes of British Studios, many of which were between 20 000 and 35 000 sq. ft. to those in Hollywood. Some of them, Warner Brothers Burbank studios, ‘for example, have an approximate floor area of 500 000 sq. ft. with an additional half a million sq. ft. allocated to permanent sets built outside.’³ Even in 1939, the largest British studio, Denham, had production stages of only 110 500 sq. ft. Junge makes depressing reading, ‘Only a few of the larger studios are well equipped and completely independent.’ Equipment was hired out by larger studios. ‘Some studios go so far as to have their “sets” or part of their sets built at other studios and transported back.’⁴

1 Rachael Low, *The History of the British Film 1918-29*, op. cit., p. 159.

2 Ibid.

3 Helmut Junge, *Plan for Film Studios*, London, 1945, p. 6.

4 Ibid., p. 11.

Many émigrés and exile film-makers had tried their luck in Hollywood in the 1920s but were unable to find their feet. Britain was, perhaps, the only alternative. Others, the photographer Mutz Greenbaum and the art director Alfred Junge, for example, had come directly from Germany, under contract to British production companies, less drawn to magnificent studios than invited to them at a point when the German film industry was still adjusting to the impact of sound and when standards in British studios needed to be improved. After 1933, many more arrived as refugees, but with less certainty of finding employment. The ultimate destination for the most ambitious, and often the more talented, remained Hollywood. England was a staging post to a potentially more promising future, although many, for one reason or another, never left British shores and established themselves permanently in Britain. Their influence on British film-making was seismic, not only in production, writing and direction, but in most of the technical spheres as well. For British born film-makers, especially for those who were unemployed, it was an egregious situation; they were dominant in the Empire but not sovereign at home.

Amongst those who made an important contribution to the British film industry of the 1930s and 1940s are numerous émigré artists, producers and technicians, but with the exception of the actors Anton Walbrook, Conrad Veidt and Elisabeth Bergner little is known about them and their presence in England has been something of an embarrassment to historians who have explained their presence as a footnote to the development of a national cinema.¹ Why this should be the case is not unique to the study of the cinema and is itself a significant part of Britain's social history; it pervades the whole of British cultural and scientific life and is part of a history of isolation, related in part to a conviction in Britain's historical purpose at the centre of an Empire. In the larger perspective the artists and technicians who came to Britain during the late 1920s and 1930s are part of the slow migration westwards across Europe, towards America, which had begun in the 19th. Century, and in which the

¹ Brief biographical details of the émigré film makers are given in the appendix.

driving forces had been the pogroms in Russia and Poland, the Russian Revolution and Civil War, and widespread anti-Semitism which was to culminate in the rise of Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany.

Amongst those who worked in Britain during the 1930s and 1940s are the designers Vincent Korda, Andrei Andrejew, Hein Heckroth, Alfred Junge and Lazare Meerson,¹ the screen writers Emeric Pressburger, Lajós Bíró and Wolfgang Wilhelm,² the photographers Otto Heller, Günther Krampf, Georges Perinal, Kurt Courant, Mutz Greenbaum, and Eugen Schüfftan,³ the composers Miklos Rozsa, Hanns Eisler, Walter Goehr, Allan Gray, Ernst Hermann Meyer and Mischa Spoliansky,⁴ the film editors Max Brenner⁵ and Oswald Hafenrichter,⁶ the producers Eric Pommer and Günther Stapenhorst,⁷ the directors Rene Clair, Paul Czinner, Zoltan Korda and Berthold Viertel⁸ the costume designer Joe Strassner, and the actors and actresses Conrad Veidt, Anton Walbrook, Paul Grätz, Dolly Haas, Fritz Kortner, Albert Lieven and Frederick Valk.

1 The designers of Pabst's *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *The Red Shoes* (1948), *Piccadilly*, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, and *Sous les Toits de Paris* respectively.

2 Creator of *The Last Command*, the Archers' films and *Farewell a Gentleman*, respectively.

3 The cine photographers of Marcel Carné's *Le Jour se Lève*, *The Queen of Spades* (1948), *Pandora's Box*, *Sous les Toits de Paris* and *Metropolis*, respectively.

4 Composers of the film music for *Kuhle Wampe*, *Great Expectations* (1946), *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, *The African Queen* (1951), *North Sea*, *The Thief of Bagdad* and *Sanders of the River*, respectively. Spoliansky and Gray were in the first generation of film composers, from cabaret and revue, and wrote incidental music, Rozsa was in the second, composing large symphonic scores to carry the theme of the film. Others, like the Russian born composer, Nicholas Brodsky, who was brought over by Cochran to work for his revue *Home and Beauty* established themselves with songs plus incidental music. A third generation, of whom Karl Rathaus was one, included sound as a component of their scores. The second and third generations took advantage of improving sound techniques and usually went to Hollywood. Brodsky was offered a contract by Hollywood before the war, but wanted to stay in England, see *Daily Express*, 10 Jan. 1937 and wrote music for *French Without Tears*, *Freedom Radio*, *Tomorrow We Live* and *The Demi-Paradise*.

5 Editor of films by Robert Siodmak and E. A. Dupont in Germany. Brenner came to England in 1935 and worked, mostly, on second rate films. In *KW*, 5 March, 1936, he describes the differences between British and German styles of editing.

6 Editor of *Madchen in Uniform*.

7 Two of the most important UFA producers.

8 Directors of *Der Geiger von Florenz*, *Sanders of the River*, and the model for Bergmann in Isherwood's *Prater Violet*.

There are as many explanations for the historical weakness of British cinema as there are historians of it. Generally it has been put down to the exclusiveness of the American market.¹ Julian Petley,² recognises the ‘inferiority of much British product,’ which ‘all too often seemed tame and unexciting compared to American or Continental imports’.³ Whilst he recognises what he describes as ‘a mélange of economic and ideological determinants’,⁴ he explains that ‘much of industry’s plight in these early years can of course be put down to a simple lack of capital, which meant that it failed to develop an adequate production base, failed to compete effectively either abroad or on the home market and had to rely to a large extent on talent whose primary source of remuneration lay elsewhere (ie in literature and theatre)’.⁵ Yet this shortcoming has a larger perspective and, is itself, encompassed within a vision of Empire which was fixed, unchanging and exclusive, and gives rise to many of the economic, creative difficulties and conflicts which the British film industry experienced in its search for a national cinema, independent of intrusions and invasions from Europe and Hollywood.

If Hollywood dominated the British domestic market, Europe dominated its creative perspectives and the producers, writers, designers and technicians who came to Britain from 1928 onwards compelled a fresh consideration of the form which a uniquely British cinema might take. German cinema of the 1920s established cinematic standards for both European and American films. Hitchcock, who had directed his first two films in Munich as co-productions with Emelka Productions was characteristic of those who had come into contact with German methods of production: ‘My models were forever after the German film-makers of 1924 and 1925. They were trying very hard to express their ideas in purely visual terms’⁶.

1 Linda Wood, ed., *British Films 1927-1939*, London, 1986, for example.

2 Julian Petley, ‘The Lost Continent’, in *All Our Yesterdays*, ed. Charles Barr, London, 1986, pp. 98-119.

3 Ibid. p. 103.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Donald Spoto, *The Life of Alfred Hitchcock*, London, 1983, p. 68.

The sheer technical competence of German technicians was noted also by Michael Powell. The German cinema had

the best technicians...I had ever seen...The Americans, the French, and the English couldn't hold a candle to them. First of all the early great days of UFA and then the people who came over to British International Pictures...like Dupont, making *Moulin Rouge* and *Piccadilly* and *Cape Forlorn*, and Alfred Junge, his art director with this fabulous control of the whole organization of making films. I thought that their actors had too much discipline, but then that was a personal point of view.¹

It might be argued that émigré filmmakers were the first to introduce professional standards to Britain. As many of the more skilled and talented artists and technicians working in the country were foreign, they were both needed and resented. From this arose a set of ideological conflicts which were conflated with the practical concerns of employment and the conflicting claims of differing cultures upon filmmakers. The social conditions which applied to Hollywood were different and filmmakers born abroad were often welcomed into the industry. 'What makes Hollywood so much better than anything else in the world' wrote André Bazin in 1957

is not only the quality of certain directors, but also the vitality and, in a certain sense, the excellence of a tradition. Hollywood's superiority is only incidentally technical.... The American cinema has been able, in an extraordinary competent way, to show American society just as it wanted to see itself; but not at all passively...but dynamically; i.e. by participating...in the building of this society.²

Many emigres to Hollywood were unable to establish themselves but it was nevertheless an industry in which exiles thrived. In Britain there was no such commitment to the cinema as a social force which could engage in transforming the nation's view of itself. It was the provider of pap which ignored the historical position in which the nation found itself. To be sure, the problem was not solely that of the cinema, it was that of the establishment itself and Britain completely misjudged the political upheaval in Europe in the process.³ It retained a Buchanish approach in

¹Michael Powell, interview with author, Kevin Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell: In Collaboration*, London, 1971

² André Bazin, 'La Politique des Auteurs', *Cahiers du Cinéma* 70, 1957. Translated in Peter Graham, ed. *The New Wave*, London, 1968.

³ For a description of the political naivety which Chamberlain exhibited see, for example

foreign policy, which the cinema reflected and few questioned, except that Powell and Pressburger were to satirize it in *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*.¹

The cultural orthodoxy of British film for the 1930s and early 1940s is of an heroic struggle by documentary filmmakers to establish themselves in a universally hostile political, industrial and financial environment. Andrew Higson describes it as an 'ideological struggle to establish an authentic, indigenous national cinema in response to ... the idea of Hollywood as an irresponsible cinema of spectacle and "escapism"'² and whilst there is certainly truth in this, its development is closely associated with the notion of Empire and its programme was both more complex and more confused. It was, as he notes, deeply divided 'between a concern for aesthetic principles and experimentation and a concern for education and propaganda,'³ but it also extended its struggle to include the whole of the commercial cinema of Britain, much of which was closely associated with European film-makers.

This is not the place to question whether the documentary film is, indeed, 'Britain's outstanding contribution to the film'. Charles Barr has noted, that at the height of the documentarists' achievement in the 1940s, the 'enduring fascination [of *Brief Encounter* (Cineguild 1945. dir. David Lean)] surely comes from the way in which, handling its very "British" material, it enacts processes of fantasy which are basic to the cinema' and not from the documentary tradition at all. It is, however, the opportunity to observe that the co-incidence of the war and the supposed triumph of documentary needs to be seen alongside other British achievements of the period, especially that of the Battle of Britain. The British at war had the Spitfire and the Hurricane, the British cinema fought the battle for the nation with the documentary which, as John Grierson promoted it, may have owed everything to the

1 Films such as *The 39 Steps* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel* are typical.

2 Andrew Higson, "'Britain's Outstanding Contribution to the Film", in Charles Barr (ed.) *All Our Yesterday* London, 1986, p.74.

3 Ibid., p. 75.

earlier initiatives of Flaherty and Cavalcanti, but was itself 'less aesthetic and more social in its approach.'¹ During the war it assumed a social cohesion, in which, as Higson puts it, required 'the articulation of the public sphere as the sphere of a national interest immediately recognisable as transcending sectional interests'.² However valid and informative Higson's thesis is, and he is not blind to many of its difficulties, it rests on an assumption that under 'the unique circumstances of World War II, the documentary idea came to inform both much commercial film-making practice and the dominant discourses of film criticism'.³

The two are not necessarily conjoined and for the moment we are primarily concerned with the latter. Raymond Durnat notes how the 'thematic and stylistic programme' of 30s documentaries, 'deeply affected critical responses to the mainstream British film,'⁴ and similarly observes a cluster of contradictions. It is no accident that his acerbic side-glance at the films of the movement is placed not at the beginning of his influential book, *A Mirror for England*, but at its centre, where he emphasises the 'humbug' and 'aestheticism' which he and others have sensed in many of its films and where he notes that the 'documentarists are interested in people only insofar as they are well adjusted citizens ... [Documentary] must fail when it comes to contacting the experiences and preferences of the common man which it fondly imagines it reveres.'⁵

Charles Barr, similarly, writes of a British feature film as one which 'by common consent...came into its own in World War Two...when British films subordinated individual desire and ambition to the team and the job....'⁶ He is however more sympathetic.

It is impossible to exaggerate the centrality of this period to any reading of

1 John Grierson, 'The Course of Realism,' in *Footnotes to the Film*, ed. Charles Davy, London, 1937, pp. 137-161.

2 Higson, loc. cit., p. 84.

3 Ibid., p.72.

4 Raymond Durnat, *A Mirror for England*, London, 1970, p. 2.

5 Ibid. pp. 117-125

6 Charles Barr, 'Amnesia and Schizophrenia', in *All Our Yesterdays*, ed. Barr, op.cit., 1986, p.10.

British film history, from whatever critical perspective ... By the end of the war, a positive reading of 'mainstream' British cinema for the first time became convincingly available, both in Britain and abroad. It was a cinema unproblematically British in personnel (after a decade of foreign infiltration that was resented by many) ...¹

There are many areas for further research indicated here not least because it is necessary to consider the series of coercive terms which Barr uses: 'common consent', 'the team and the job', 'a positive reading', and 'convincingly available', but also because his reference to an unwelcome, invading army of non-British film-makers who had taken over the British film industry by stealth and who were eventually pushed aside, is one with which many documentary film makers and trade unionists concurred. Indeed, as we shall see, John Grierson himself, was a pivotal figure in developing the argument that British films and British studios had been usurped by 'foreigners', the 'cosmopolites of world's cities, to whom Lancashire is only Gracie Fields's hundred-thousand a year and the men of Clyde not even a whisper in consciousness.'²

For all his blushes towards the international character of documentary film making Grierson thought of documentary as a 'British cinema', a description which reflects, in part his courting of State sponsorship, but it should also be seen in a wider perspective which incorporates the social and political conditions of the period, especially those which are associated with the economic depression which ran throughout the 1930s. Just as important, it was exclusive.

Part One, therefore, takes the writings of Jeffrey Richards on the films of Empire as its starting point. It considers the ways in which films responded to political events in Europe within the myth of Empire and looks at their response to anti-Semitism, to refugees and to aliens. Jews and aliens were not only subject material, they were

1 Ibid. p.11. Barr repeats the oft-made point that by the end of the war 'a productive coalition had been formed out of previously opposed factions: documentary personnel had been integrated into the industry. A lesson was that British cinema had embraced its true vocation, the most noble vocation of cinema itself: realism.' Actually, the number of documentary film-makers who entered the feature industry is not as significant as is sometimes believed.

2 Grierson, loc. cit., p. 160.

actual people, many of whom were closely associated with developments in British cinema and a fresh look at available material reveals that British films shadowed closely the changing perception of émigrés. British cinema accommodated émigrés and refugees from Europe and reflected a changing ideological position to preserve a notion of British values and a sense of Empire.

Part Two looks at the financial aspects of British cinema in the 1930s and the search for the secret of the ‘international’ film which would be as universally popular as the Hollywood movie. The advent of sound transformed all previous understanding of a national film with universal appeal and isolated some countries from the global market. Germany is a case in point. Its film industry was struck a near terminal blow in 1929, when it became quite clear that the silent film was dead. Producers looked to ways round the problem and made bi-lingual and multi-lingual versions of the same film, but they were gradually abandoned as their limitations became increasingly obvious. The ‘international’ film came to be seen as one which could be successfully sold in the world’s largest market and all British producers of consequence looked for arrangements by which British films could be successfully distributed in America. Finance was raised for their production through the City of London which saw the opportunity for easy money but in 1937 discovered that it had been foolhardy and the film industry found itself associated with a number of financial scandals which have never been completely understood. Historians have tended to identify incompetent management of producers Alexander Korda, Max Schach and Julius Hagen for example, as responsible for the failures of their film companies.¹ This with variations is the approach of all previous writers on the subject, but with the use of recently available material it is now possible to recognize that this is misleading and that a clearer understanding requires a broader context than that of individual film producers.

The difficulty in describing the distinct contribution of the foreign technician in the

¹ The Capitol Film Corporation, London Films Ltd., and Twickenham Films, respectively.

thirties, is precisely that which made it so elusive to the Englishman in the industry. It only gradually dawned on film-makers and critics that employment did not necessarily follow from technical ability. Ideology, although no one used the word, was actually the central issue. Acquired skills only provided the means by which it could be expressed. The German conception of cinema, 'pure cinema' as it was generally called, was influential in Hollywood and dominant in Britain. The German-trained filmmaker had an artistic conception of cinema which was linked to a literary and philosophical tradition.

Producers and the trade press certainly recognized the distinction, but it was quite a different matter convincing aspiring cine-photographers, for example, that they had not yet made the grade. Paul Rotha made an astute point when he observed that the 'British film has never been self-sufficient, in that it has never achieved its independence.... For its obscure source it goes firstly to the American, and secondly, but more remote to discern, to the German film.'¹ The Technicians Trade Union, the Association of Cinematograph Technicians (ACT) saw a native industry being dominated by foreign producers and employing foreign technicians which restricted employment opportunities and training for Britain's indigenous craftsman. From the moment of its creation it sought to find avenues by which it could limit the numbers of foreign technicians from America and the Continent. Along with other bodies, it attempted to persuade the Ministry of Labour to respond to a policy which in the end would have been self-destructive. Previous knowledge of the delegations which the trade union made to the Ministry of Labour has derived from the ACT's own journal and the full nature of the campaign has never been fully appreciated. Recently, however, official documentation has been made available which helps towards a more comprehensive understanding. ACT frequently argued that its policy with regard to the employment of foreign technicians was misunderstood and access to a number of ACT files has made it possible to supplement official records and understand its

¹ Paul Rotha, *The Film Till Now*, London, 1930 p. 226. Phrasing was changed slightly for later editions.

thinking more clearly.

Rachael Low endorses the view which was promoted by the ACT during the 1930s, that 'despite a persistent drain to Hollywood there has never been a shortage of film-making talent in Britain.'¹ The main factors preventing a success for British films on world markets, so the argument goes, was not quality, the lack of capital investment in the industry or the inadequate technical training which was to be had on Quota films, but the domination of film distribution by the great American majors on the one hand, and foreign controlled production in Britain on the other. The latter, international in its consciousness, operated as a fifth column, without loyalty to the host nation and deliberately excluded equally skilled artists and technicians. Graham Greene's opprobrious review of *The Marriage of Corbal* (Capitol 1936, dir. Karl Grune) illustrates this attitude clearly. He found the result appalling and writes of 'Herr Grune and his international assistants,' of 'the dark alien executive tipping his cigar ash behind the glass partition in Wardour Street, the Hungarian producer adapting Mr. Wells's ideas tactfully at Denham, [and] the German director letting himself down into his canvas chair at Elstree.'

England, of course, has always been the home of the exiled; but one may at least express a wish the émigrés would set up trades in which their ignorance of our language and culture was less of a handicap ... We have saved the English film industry from American competition only to surrender it to a far more alien control.²

1 Rachael Low, *Film Making*, London, 1985, p. xiv.

2 Graham Greene, *The Spectator*, 19 June, 1936, in *The Pleasure-Dome*, London, 1972. Greene writes similarly, 19 March 1937, of *Thunder in the City*. (Atlantic Film Productions 1937 dir. Marion Gering) which Rachael Low disparagingly describes it as 'clearly designed as [Alexander] Esway's ticket to Hollywood', Low, op. cit., p. 205. Greene dismisses it for 'its tricky self-conscious continuity, its horde of Hollywood stars on holiday...and its complete ignorance...of English life and behaviour.' It does not deserve so censorious a treatment. It satirizes English life and manners, especially as they would appear to the foreigner. Edward G. Robinson flies by his shirt-tail in rustling up funds in a Britain of cold bedrooms and distant bathrooms and lavatories. The manner in which Robinson is able to generate a share issue and float a company to develop a Rhodesian mine which produces a metal ore, Magnelite, is unbelievable but no more so than the way in which money was raised for the film industry at the time. With opportunist accountants standing by to exploit Robinson's initial success, Esway found in Robert Sherwood's story, an appropriately ironic theme.

Part Three considers ACT policy towards alien technicians from 1933 to shortly after the war, when specific examples help to identify the policy convincingly. It is now possible to achieve a fresh understanding of events and show that the protectionist policies which the ACT adopted throughout the period of this study were a direct reflection of other aspects of British society.

Part Four considers the employment of émigré artists at the BBC. It has long been known that many artists worked for the Foreign Service of the BBC during the war and that others were employed in differing capacities throughout the whole of the organisation. Studies of the BBC at this time, whilst covering the the Foreign Sections¹ barely touch on the work of European exiles from 1939-1945. The Corporation provides a particularly felicitous example of the way in which an already existing institution, with its own established values and traditions, worked with and responded to foreign artists. BBC Written Archives provides comprehensive documentation on the subject, but as in other areas of this study, use has been made of interviews and other material where they help to facilitate a broader understanding of the subject. Personalities who were employed by the BBC during the war, but did not enter the film industry until after it have been excluded² and no attempt has been made to extend research beyond the area of official broadcasting to Europe and the domestic markets. The BBC monitoring service and the area of so-called 'black' propaganda which emanated from Woburn Abbey under the auspices of Richard Crossman and, later, Denis Sefton Delmer remain areas for further study.

Part Five considers a notable example of how the conflict between Britain's traditional role and the need to take hold of a changing historic situation led to conflicts in film production. Films seemingly destined for one market would suddenly be launched into another. In a nervous response to a rapidly developing economic, political, and artistic scene immediately prior to the outbreak of war, the

¹ Asa Briggs, *The War of Words*, London, 1970; Gerard Mansell, *Let The Truth Be Told*, London, 1982 in particular.

² Peter Illing for example.

London Films production of *The Thief of Bagdad* was continually transformed whilst it was being made. All previous accounts of its making recognize a shambles in production which was finally licked into shape when its director, Ludwig Berger, was forced from the picture and others took over. The finished film, completed in Hollywood and spun from the hands of six directors is said to bear little resemblance to its original conception, yet admirers of the films of Michael Powell have 'found it impossible not to attribute its striking *consistency* of imagery and theme to Powell'.¹ It does not seem to have struck these enthusiasts that the influence was the other way and that *The Thief of Bagdad* provides the best and clearest example of the manner in which, for twenty years, a talented European film director cast his spell over the creative imagination of one of Britain's most acclaimed directors, Michael Powell.

1 Ian Christie, *Arrows of Desire*, London, 1985, p. 50 provides an example. The same could be said about another Korda film, *The Jungle Book*, to which Powell made no contribution.

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PART FIVE

Friedrich Feher, Ludwig Berger and the Tradition of the Pre-recorded Film

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Abbreviations Used in the Text.

ACT	Association of Cinematograph Technicians.
AtM	ACT Application for Membership.
BAFD	British Association of Film Directors.
BBFC	British Board of Film Censors.
BIED	British Independent Exhibitors Distribution.
BMA	British Medical Association.
BoT	Board of Trade.
BFI	British Film Institute.
<i>BFY</i>	<i>British Film Yearbook.</i>
CEA	Cinema Exhibitors Association.
CFC	Capitol Film Corporation.
CFP	Capitol Film Productions
D & PS	Directors and Producers Section.
<i>CT</i>	<i>The Cine-Technician.</i>
FDAPS	ACT Feature Directors and Associate Producers Section.
FDKB	Free German League of Culture.
F&F	<i>Films and Filming.</i>
<i>FiR</i>	<i>Films in Review.</i>
<i>IK</i>	<i>Film-Kurier.</i>
<i>IT</i>	<i>Financial Times.</i>
GFD	General Film Distributors.
<i>HJI</i>	<i>Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television.</i>
ILP	Independent Labour Party.
<i>JACT</i>	<i>The Journal of the Association of Cine-Technicians.</i>
<i>JC</i>	<i>The Jewish Chronicle.</i>
<i>JCH</i>	<i>Journal of Contemporary History.</i>
<i>Kine</i> (text)	<i>Kinematograph Weekly.</i>
KRS	Kinematograph Renters Society.
<i>KW</i> (fts)	<i>Kinematograph Weekly.</i>
<i>Leader</i>	<i>Leader Magazine.</i>
<i>MI B</i>	<i>Monthly Film Bulletin.</i>
<i>MG</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian.</i>
MoI	Ministry of Information.
MoL	Ministry of Labour.
<i>NYHT</i>	<i>New York Herald Tribune.</i>
<i>NYP</i>	<i>New York Post.</i>
<i>PPB</i>	<i>Pem's Personal Bulletins.</i>
P as B	Programme as Broadcast.
<i>Picturegoer</i>	<i>Picturegoer Weekly.</i>
<i>Picturegoer & FW</i>	<i>Picturegoer and Film Weekly.</i>
SMPE	Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers.
<i>S&S</i>	<i>Sight and Sound.</i>
UA	United Artists.
WEM	War Emergency Membership.
<i>WFN</i>	<i>World Film News and Television Progress.</i>

Introduction

The Second World War was an interruption of an historical development in which Britain was being reluctantly compelled to recognize that the British Empire was in terminal decline. Its response, was to try and establish a Commonwealth of nations in which it was the natural point of focus. Charles Mowat shows how the Conservative Party's stand on Protectionism and imperial trade was at the centre of a debate which began in July 1929 when Lord Beaverbrook 'began in his newspapers his campaign for "Empire Free Trade" as a means of overcoming the country's chronic economic ills: complete freedom of trade between all countries of the British Empire, with a tariff wall around the Empire, shutting out the rest of the world.'¹ The Imperial Conference of October 1930 'was held, with most of the Dominion prime ministers in attendance. Though it was partly concerned with constitutional questions...its main preoccupations were economic,'² and there were proposals for trade-offs, promises of imperial preference for the dominions and questions about the status of India, but by 1931 'the barriers of ideas against Protectionism were breaking.'³ Not only were bankers, industrialists, and the Federation of British Industries in favour of Imperial protection, but so were 'voices from the other side: Mosley's manifesto and his New Party; and, even more important, the TUC which, at its meeting in September 1930, gave serious thought to the development of trade within the Empire.'⁴ Even John Maynard Keynes was proposing a temporary revenue tariff in order to increase demand for home manufactures and so provide employment. It was an argument which ran and ran.

1 Charles Loch Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars 1919-1940*, Chicago, 1955, pp. 366-367.

2 Ibid., p. 367-8.

3 Ibid., p. 371.

4 Ibid. p. 372.

The proposed trade fortification around Britain finds its cultural equivalent in the cinema's attitude to Europe. The political situation which was being recorded in the German and British press throughout the 1930s was being gloomily, even hysterically, monitored by the *Jewish Chronicle* and was also described in such widely read books as *Germany Puts the Clock Back*.¹ They were among the fabric of influences to which, to a lesser or greater degree all scriptwriters, producers and directors were subject and finds its literary manifestation in some of the novels of the late 1930s, those by Ernest Borneman and George Orwell for example. The hero of Orwell's *Coming Up for Air*, George Bowling experiences a 'kind of prophetic feeling...the feeling that war's just round the corner and that war's the end of all things....'² Borneman's Joe Banyan is an unemployed film-cameraman who only slowly recognises that his unstable personal life echoes the international situation which is filling the newspapers. He is shiftless and cannot settle, one girl friend commits suicide leaving him an acrimonious note, whilst another is nearly killed in an accident and his child is still-born.³ Similarly, many films convey a sense of the inevitable, of events beyond control, the heroes are victims of a political paralysis. Yet, as we have seen, the main thrust of British policy, closely reflected in the cinema, was with maintaining and reinforcing traditional loyalties. The economic links which Britain sought to conserve with the Commonwealth and Empire were replicated in a cinema. Language naturally was important, but only in so far as it played its part in the ideology of Empire. The BBC's Empire Service commenced in December 1932. 'The service, which was transmitted in English,' writes Philip M. Taylor, 'was

1 Edgar Ansel Mowrer, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, Harmondsworth, 1933. A new edition with new material was published in 1938.

2 George Orwell, *Coming Up for Air*, London, 1939. Quotation from Harmondsworth edition, 1962, p. 25.

3 Ernest Borneman, *Love Story*, London, [1941]. Borneman's other pre-war novel, *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*, London, 1937, is a detective story set inside the film industry. Both show him exploring modernist influences and now seem quaint. Refugees and émigrés were never still and Berthold Viertel, for example, wrote to Herr Burschell, 5 July 1938, letter in Deutsche Bibliothek, apologizing for not having received his letters as he had been constantly on the move.

designed to keep the scattered Dominions and expatriates in constant touch with the mother country and to ensure that British overseas communities were kept reliably and regularly informed of events in Britain.’¹ These factors, as we shall see, go some way to explaining why, in spite of the undeniable influence of European émigrés in British cinema, the subject has been previously ignored.

Recent literature on the cinema has examined the relationship between film and social structures of the period but has failed to note the specific creative role of the émigré. Jeffrey Richards argues that the imperial perspective apparent in films like *Sanders of the River* (1935), *Rhodes of Africa* (1936), *King Solomon’s Mines* (1937), *The Drum* (1938) and *The Four Feathers* (1949) was a component in the way that the myth of the British Empire and its ‘God-given duty to ensure fair play for all the world...was preserved in the country at large.’² He writes that ‘Korda’s Empire’ [films] sought to stress the virtues of the British Imperial system...at a time when the rise of Fascism was threatening these ideals and offering a different sort of world government.’³ Although the ‘stirring scenes of regiments on the march’, albeit within the framework of entertainment, of *The Drum* and *The Four Feathers* leave one in no doubt that they ‘are marching against tyranny and oppression,’ Richards makes no great claims for them as being specifically anti-fascist but he sees them as proposing a contrast with Nazism, asserting the ‘moral superiority of the British to everyone else by virtue of their commitment to a code of behaviour which involves the preservation of law, order and justice for love of those qualities’.⁴ Apart from aspiring to ‘capture a larger sha[r]e of the lucrative Empire film market’ and to stress the British Imperial ‘doctrines of fair play and moral authority,’⁵ Richards suggests that they helped to foster “‘the illusion of permanence’”, for an Empire which ‘would last a thousand

1 Philip M. Taylor, *The Projection of Britain*, p. 191. For a discussion of the issues involved see pp. 181-215.

2 Jeffrey Richards, ‘Korda’s Empire’, *Australian Journal of Screen Theory*, 5-6, (1979), p. 123.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 123-124.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

years.’¹ There were certainly ideological contrasts between the idea of Empire and those of fascism but Richards fails to acknowledge the degree to which political events in Europe were ignored by a cinema which being pulled along by a combination of political and commercial demands.

Elsewhere Richards argues that the ‘cinema of Empire’, as he calls it, advocated, through its plots, ‘a view of the British Empire as beneficent and necessary.’² There was no direct official influence on them, but they offered ‘patriotism with profit’ in a form which was highly acceptable to the British government. He notes their 19th century nostalgia, the involvement of figures like Winston Churchill in an unmade Jubilee film for Korda and of Sir Robert Vansittart in co-writing the celebration of Queen Victoria’s reign, *Sixty Glorious Years*. For all their rhetoric, they ignore Europe entirely and celebrate the virtues of Empire at the very point at which Britain was finally trying to come to terms with its declining influence in the Dominions.³ They were extolling the moral virtues of Empire as a rescue operation from the world slump; along with the sovereign’s Christmas Day broadcasts⁴ and the Silver Jubilee of 1935, they all emphasised the Crown as a focus of ‘common allegiance’

Charles Barr, also, recognises this development in his study of Ealing Studios, in which he also draws attention to Sir John Reith, Michael Balcon, and John Grierson as ‘a trio of powerful figures, in the creation and the *colouring*, of distinctly British media.... The BBC, documentary, and the patriotic feature film all find a central function together in wartime ...’.⁵ The point to be observed is that between them both Richards and Barr recognize that, in some way or other, all the significant forces of

1 Ibid. p. 137-8.

2 Jeffrey Richards, “‘Patriotism with Profit’” in James Curran and Vincent Porter, eds., *British Cinema History*, London, 1983, pp. 245-56.

3 Confirmed in both the 1931 Statute of Westminster and the 1935 Government of India Act. The Statute of Westminster gave formal recognition was given to the fact that Dominion Governments could both pass its own legislation and decline to accept Westminster authority. The Government of India Act provided for an all-India Federation and greater autonomy for the provincial governments.

4 The first was in 1932.

5 Charles Barr, “‘Projecting England’”, *Screen*, Spring 1974, p. 87-88.

cinema, both 'educational', in the cases of Reith and Grierson, and commercial, in the those of Korda and Balcon, combine within a common framework of the promotion of Empire. Not only were the Empire films transparently part of a double marketing strategy within commercial cinema but the documentary movement in Britain was nurtured within the Empire Marketing Board, the task of which, as Stuart Hood puts it, 'was to promote the consumption of the products of the Empire as part of the attempt to make the Empire function as a self-sufficient economic system.'¹

Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann go some way to explaining the British cinema's devotion to the mythology of Empire. They emphasise the cushioning effect which enabled Britain to import food and raw materials cheaply and 'helped ruling circles to avoid a decisive conflict with the working people at home. In addition,' they continue 'the Imperial Preference system allowed Britain to give tariff protection to her own industry in home and Empire markets.'² Furthermore they note that the income to the country through 'invisible' exports offset the adverse balance of visible trade and helped disguise its economic decline *vis-a-vis* Japan, Germany, and the US. 'The tendency of British investors to export capital to the colonies, rather than invest it in modernizing production at home, had contributed to the technical backwardness of the older basic industries in Britain....'³

Hence the characteristics of the British film industry were to be found in British industry as a whole and drew attention away from Europe. Poor management, lack of investment, and shortage of trained personnel were endemic features of British industrial society. The British economy of the early 1930s was caught in the shock waves which began with the stock market crash in New York in 1929. By 1933, 23 % of all insured workers were unemployed⁴ and the impact would have been more severe had it not been for Britain's traditional trade links. In this climate, the British

1 Stuart Hood, 'John Grierson and the Documentary Film Movement', in Curran and Porter, op cit. , pp. 101-112.

2 Ibid. p. 13.

3 Ibid.

4 Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties*, London, 1971, p. 11.

Empire with the cinema as its arch propagandist, was seen as the natural market for British goods and ideas. Continental Europe was culturally more distant than Australia or Canada; foreign workers and refugees from Germany within the film industry were tolerated but unwanted. Producers, artists and technicians provided stimulus but were felt to be pulling the carpet from under the feet of the English.

Significantly, in 1932, the first issue of the British Film Institute's journal, *Sight and Sound* carried an article entitled 'The Cinema and the Empire' which noted the 'increasing importance of Empire films'¹ and *Picturegoer* ran a feature, 'The Empire Buys British'² in which it described 'the steady advance made by [British] films in the big Empire market's overseas....' According to *Picturegoer*, 1933 'was a record one for British films in the Island Commonwealth', Australia, where a recent cinema merger had led to 'the establishment of a circuit of 214 kinemas pledged to a policy of all British programmes'³ and in 1933 'the Dominion took 112 [British] feature films — something like six times as many as the whole of Europe and America combined.' We can see now that the cultural and economic hegemony which British films assisted was thought to be more naturally within the Empire than the United States which, anyway, had intractable trade barriers of its own. Europe was ignored entirely.

1 J. Russell Orr, 'The Cinema and the Empire', S&S, Spring 1932. It was a report on the Imperial Conference.

2 *Picturegoer's British Film Supplement*, n.d., [1934].

3 It carefully does not note whether the cinemas are to have exclusively British programmes.

PART ONE

Empire and Diversions: Europe, Aliens, Exile and British Film 1930 -1945

It may be asked whether [foreign producers] have sufficient knowledge of our traditional character to decide the basic plots and types of our future productions. Certainly several of the productions scheduled for 1937 could never have been conceived in the mind of an Englishman...The heads of some of our production companies might consider the advisability of calling into consultation one who had inherited knowledge.
Kine, 11 Feb. 1937.

I suspect that England after Waterloo, or say from 1800 onward, suffered a particular and special darkness due to interruption of normal communication with the Continent.
Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur*.

Introduction

James Kugman writes of the 1930s as a period in which war ‘hung over the decade like a shadow’. He lists the war between Bolivia and Paraguay, the Japanese war, the Italian war in Abyssinia, and expanding German fascism ‘calling for *Lebensraum*, the attack on Spain, on Austria, on Czechoslovakia, World War Two.’¹ He observes the not-coincidental broadening pacifism and anti-war feeling of the period, the ‘anti-war’ literature of Henri Barbusse, Ludwig Renn and the huge success of Erich Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front*. The ‘great British war poets like Sassoon and Owen suddenly had a new lease of life amongst the youth of the middle and later twenties’ and there were a number of organisations ‘dedicated to informing people about the horrors of war.’² Writing in 1990, it is barely conceivable that Chamberlain could have broadcast in the evening of 27 September 1939 and referred to Hitler’s territorial

¹ James Kugman, ‘The Crisis in the Thirties: A View from the Left,’ *Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties*, ed. Jon Clark et al., London, 1979, p. 16ff.

² Ibid. p. 16-17. Kugman mentions *Nie wieder Krieg!* (No More War!), The Peace Pledge Union, and the pacifist stream inside both the Labour Party and the ILP.

claims on Czechoslovakia as ‘a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing ...’¹ but it emphasizes the degree to which Britain was still looking for a destiny independent of European history.

Writers have frequently attempted to establish that there were hidden codes which reveal the concern of the cinema with an inevitable war against fascism but it would have required the commercial film industry to have abandoned its traditional short-term interests and established itself in opposition to the main thrust of British politics. Although Korda, for example, was certainly concerned about the potential threat from Germany, his immediate concern was to make commercial cinema which could be successfully exploited in America. Astoundingly, *Sanders of the River*² which was three years in the making, ‘began life as a German travelogue, featuring Ernst Udet, the air ace, and photographed by Hans Schneeberger’.³ Zoltan Korda had traipsed round parts of Africa with 1000 000 feet of film stock, four cameras and the second unit photographer Osmond Borradaile.⁴ Like its makers, it never lost its foreign accent. Korda had acquired the subject, which was to be made as a bi-lingual at Nice, in early summer, 1932 but Gaumont-British who was to distribute it, rejected the story. It re-emerged, almost a year later, after the success of *Henry VIII*, transformed into an Empire subject. All that remains of the original footage is the flying sequence by Udet; only the ‘idea of the African jungle,’ as Lejeune describes it, survived the absorption of an Edgar Wallace story and the adaptation by Jeffrey Dell and Lajós Biró.⁵ Korda had utilised a colonial concept to grasp a commercial opportunity.

1 *The Times*, 28 Sept. 1938.

2 Originally *Wings Over the Jungle*, then *Kongo Raid*, finally *Sanders of the River* and *Bosambo* in the USA.

3 C.A. Lejeune, ‘The Private Lives of London Films’ Pt. II, *Nash’s Pall Mall Magazine*, Jan. 1937, p. 102.

4 Zoltan Korda, ‘Filming in Africa’, *Film Weekly*, 5 April, 1935.

5 Ibid. At quite a late stage Joan Gardner as Sander’s fiancée, Patricia, remained, but she too was cut from the final film. Kulik does not mention the genesis of *Sanders*. In the cast, as a tribal chief, was Jonstone Kenyatta (= Jomo Kenyatta).

In the middle and late 1930s his primary objective was to exploit Technicolor and not to make oblique references to the failures of the Baldwin and Chamberlain governments in facing up to Hitler. Historians have emphasised the way in which the censor gave its imprimatur to films of the period, and, certainly, all the views emanating from the British Board of Film Censors disclose an upper class, flag-waving, conservatism. Its secretary, J. Brooke Wilkinson, admiring the sentiments of *The Four Feathers* (LFP 1939 dir. Zoltan Korda) shortly before the outbreak of war, is reputed to have told Alexander Korda: 'The British nation should be grateful to you for producing such a film at such a time,'¹ but we can be confident that he was thinking more of the quality of Empire than of Britain's quality as a combatant at war with Germany.

In his review of it Graham Greene wrote:

The story...must be known by this time to everyone — four films have been made of this ham-heroic tale...so the plot hardly matters: what is important is the colour, which is almost invariable pleasant and sometimes gives a shock of pleasure...What is important is nocturnal London smoking up through Faversham's grey windows: the close up of mulberry bodies straining at the ropes along the Nile: the cracked umber waste round the dried-up wells....We forget the silly plot....²

These films, with their innocuous story-lines, were certainly compatible with National sentiments as seen by the British Board of Film Censors but they are not the central preoccupations of the films. What makes them memorable — when they are memorable — is, as Greene notes, their physical appearance and the skills which have been employed to relate them. The colour, the imagery, and the sound are constituent elements of the fabric which makes up the totality and, as Greene recognizes, are significant components of the theme of the film.

All these writers ignore that the Empire films involved, at a high level, artists and technicians who were émigrés or refugees and that British history had been a common feature of the German stage and cinema. The Korda films involved his brothers and his long-time collaborator, the writer Lajós Biró; Georges Périnal was their

1 Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1959, p. 203.

2 Graham Greene, *The Pleasure Dome*, ed. by John Russell Taylor, Oxford, 1980, p.218.

photographer.¹ Even the music was written by the émigrés Mischa Spoliansky and Miklós Rózsa. Those from Gaumont-British were similarly closely associated with émigré film makers. *Rhodes of Africa* was directed by Berthold Viertel,² its designer was Oscar Werndorff³; Günther Stapenhorst was Associate Producer on *The Great Barrier*; Mischa Spoliansky and the designer Alfred Junge worked on *King Solomon's Mines*. Whatever the 'cinema of Empire' was, it was not solely a voluntary expression of patriotism carried out by the film production companies on behalf of the British Government. Richards assumes that the émigré adopts both the political assumptions of the host country and the characteristics of its dominant cinema, but exiles to Britain were not divorced from ideological practice of the countries they had recently left. He pays little attention to political thinking, artistic conventions, traditions and artistic considerations which came as part of his stock-in-trade and which he infused into British cinema. Dramatic representations of British history were not new subjects and Oliver Cromwell, Queen Elizabeth, Cecil Rhodes and Captain

1 In 1931, Biro was signed by Gainsborough Pictures to adapt several of its subjects. 'Mr. Biro,' *KW* observed cynically 'is not a scenario writer at all. His record, apart from a number of successful novels and plays, is that of a "treatment" expert, and as such he has for many years held a high standing in Hollywood....' *KW*, 30 April 1931, p. 57. When Mme. Denise Poznanski (Savoir) claimed damages for breach of copyright from LFP over her late husband's play *La Petite Catherine*, Sir Patrick Hastings, once more thought little of Biró's contribution to screen-writing. His contribution to *Catherine the Great* 'seemed to be a draft scenario' entitled *The Eternal Feminine*, which Korda had rejected and had 'contributed nothing to the final film.' Law Reports, *The Times*, 12 & 13 April 1937. Like Korda and Alexander Esway he had been involved in post WW1 revolutionary politics in Hungary, as Secretary of State in the Károlyi Government. He worked with Korda until 1947, when Korda directed his last film. Korda brought Périnal over from Paris in 1933 to film *The Private Life of Henry VIII*.

2 Viertel had gone to Hollywood with his family in 1927 but had found it intolerable and in July 1932 returned to Europe where he met Alexander Korda in Paris to 'discuss future projects'. Korda couldn't help, but introduced him to Gaumont-British and Viertel was soon in Britain directing the film version of Lotha's *The Little Friend*. At GB the stories were better than in Hollywood and he was given 'more freedom in handling them ...,' see Salka Viertel, *The Kindness of Strangers*, New York, 1969, p.170 ff.; Berthold Viertel, 'Christopher Isherwood and Dr. Friedrich Bergmann', *Theatre Arts*, May 1946. Isherwood admitted that Bergmann in *Prater Violet* is 'a composite of Berthold Viertel and other iconoclasts Isherwood met in Hollywood ...', *ibid*.

3 W.E.D., *S&S*, Winter, 1938, suggests that he 'foretold the coming of Hitler and cleared out,' but then W. E. D. credits him with the design of *Metropolis*. The ACT obituary, *CT*, Nov-Dec., 1938, erroneously credits him with *The Tunnel*.

Scott, for example, had all been portrayed on the German stage in the years immediately before Hitler.¹ The Empire, as far as the émigré is concerned was subservient to the technological ideas and dramatic concerns of the European film maker.

‘A Great Argument Against War’.

The blind-eye approach to Hitler’s ambition in Europe which the Chamberlain government pursued was matched by a cinema which was similarly impotent in the face of historical events. If the émigré was frequently resented as a threat to jobs, as an opportunist, or as a cultural misfit, there have recently been attempts to show that British cinema was alert to the crisis in Europe. Writing in 1954, Kurt Singer observed:

Long before Charlie Chaplin had done a parody of Hitler in *The Great Dictator*, Laughton had portrayed a ruler gone beserk in his Nero [in Cecil B. De Mille’s 1933 *The Sign of the Cross*]. Now he went to Italy to finish *I Claudius*... It was a timely story dealing with the assassinations and violent seizure of power in the Roman Empire...He played Claudius, the usurper who is later proclaimed a god, as a little man with a stutter and a lame leg...²

If Singer stretches the reader’s credulity, it is because his associations seem tenuous. Films and the creative imagination behind them are creatures of history. Other writers go as far, however, and James C. Robertson suggests that in making *Nurse Edith Cavell* (RKO-Imperator, 1939) ‘it seems likely that [Herbert Wilcox’s] purpose was to warn by implication against Nazi brutality and the growing danger of Nazi aggression following the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia on German

1 *Die Südpolexpedition des Kapitäns Scott* by Reinhard Goering in Feb. 1930, dir. Leopold Jessner, *Cecil Rhodes* by Hans Rehberg in March 1930, *Elisabeth von England* and *Oliver Cromwells Sendung* by Heinz Hilpert in 1930 and 1932, respectively.

2 Kurt Singer, *The Laughton Story*, Philadelphia, 1954, p. 176. *I Claudius* was, in fact, never finished. It was abandoned at the time when Merle Oberon was injured in a car accident.

initiative in mid-March 1939.’¹ Similarly, by the nature of this kind of account, *The Dictator*, for which Hans Wilhelm wrote the scenario, is an account of a German doctor who is able to exploit his position at the court of the weak and feeble King Christian VII of Denmark and writers have seen it as revealing the ways in which Hitler manipulated the equally feeble Hindenburg in Germany.

John Brosnan, provides a more psychological approach and notes how in the British version of *Der Tunnel*, (*The Tunnel*, GB, 1935, dir. Maurice Elvey) which is ‘set vaguely in a future world that had TV phones’, the cast wear the same 1930s fashions throughout a story which spans two decades and concludes that German film-makers had been trying to devise effective ways of travelling to America with these films about flying platforms set in the Atlantic and of transatlantic tunnels. According to Brosnan, *Der Tunnel* was an ‘unconscious reflection of the fact that many German film-makers knew they would be making the journey sooner or later, either lured by Hollywood promises or to escape the Nazi menace.’² Kurt Bernhardt, the director of both French and German versions, had difficulty viewing them in this way³ and Sidney Gilliat who was assigned of the English script to the British version (GB 1935, dir. Maurice Elvey) considered the project ludicrous and tried to transform

1 James C. Robertson, ‘Dawn (1928): Edith Cavell and Anglo-German relations’, *HJF*, Vol. 4, No.1 1984, p. 25. This might seem a heavy reading of a covering letter from Wilcox to BBFC which indicates that the film would emphasise the conflict between the patriotic urge for victory in war and humanitarian values.

2 John Brosnan, *Future Tense*, London, 1978, p. 51. Hence, *The Ghost Goes West* (LFP 1935, dir. René Clair) and *The Dictator*, (Toepfritz, 1935, dir. Victor Saville) are examples of the cinematic imagination echoing the social climate. Clair’s film tells of a Laird’s castle being dismantled and taken stone by stone, complete with its ghost, to the United States, where it is reassembled. Trans-Atlantic flights were usually from America to Europe.

3 See Mary Kiersch, *Curtis Bernhardt, Interviewed by Mary Kiersch*, London, 1986. Almost uniquely, Kiersch suggests that his ‘films during the French-English period often reflect the predicament of the refugee....’ p. 2. This valuable interview gives a good account of how he left Germany after hearing Goebbels express anti-Semitic views, but later found himself at Geiselsgasteig, Munich, directing *Der Tunnel*, ‘the only Jewish director allowed to work in Germany’. Immediately before the outbreak of war, Bernhardt, in France, bought a ticket to America aboard the Ile-de France. ‘On a hunch’ he thought it wiser to sail from Southampton and came to England to sail on 1 Sept., 1939 but the ship sailed without notifying any of its passengers in England, p. 69. Salka Viertel, who was one of the passengers on the ship along with Gregor Piatigorsky and Nathan Milstein; see Salka Viertel, op. cit., pp. 236-239.

it into a Langian fantasy. Political events in Germany were not consciously in his mind any more than they had been for *The Lady Vanishes*, which ‘was set in mit-Europa and could just as easily have been Yugoslavia’.¹ Even the casting of Lilli Palmer as Rikki Krausner, an Austrian refugee, in *The Rake’s Progress* (Individual, 1945) was a piece of stumbling good fortune. Palmer, herself a refugee from Austria, had married her screen partner, Rex Harrison, only recently and this apparently metonymic device, it turns out, was not one at all for Launder and Gilliat had first tested both Joan Greenwood and Renée Asherson for the part before proposing the idea.²

At first glance, some relationships seem undeniable. A correspondent to *The Times* pointed out, that *The Four Feathers* ‘presents us with an anachronism’ by erroneously dressing Kitchener’s men in Khaki.³ It was a relevant point, but one from which the wrong conclusions could be drawn. It was neither an error on Korda’s part nor a reference to the contemporary British fighting forces. John Clements, who played Harry Faversham, also recalled how Korda, personally, overrode the film’s military adviser and changed blue uniforms to red for the ball sequence simply because he wanted to take advantage of Technicolor.⁴ When similar objections were made to *Rhodes of Africa*, Berthold Viertel defended his approach. ‘In history the fact rules, in drama it is the imagination,’ he wrote:

1 Interview with author, 8 Jan. 1990; also, see Geoff Brown, *Launder and Gilliat*, London, 1977, p. 67.

2 Sidney Gilliat to author, 8 Jan. 1990. Palmer, of course, could have been at the back of their minds all the time for they were concerned that Palmer might not want to draw attention to her Jewish refugee status. Palmer had fled to Paris and appeared in cabaret. Curtis Melnitz, who saw her, introduced her to Korda who gave her a screen test. She finally landed herself a contract with Gaumont-British, working her way through a series of minor parts, until Günther Stapenhorst gave her a hand in *The Great Barrier* (Gaumont-British 1937, dir. Milton Rosmer); *Picturegoer*, 6 March 1937; *Picture Show*, 23 Feb. 1946; Lilli Palmer, *Change Lobsters and Dance*, London, 1976.

3 *The Times*, 14 July 1939. See also, Charles R. Beard, ‘Why Get it Wrong’, *S&S*, Winter, 1934.

4 Sir John Clements, interview with Robert Vas, quoted in Karol Kulik, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1975, p. 214.

The dramatist is concerned with his own necessity — the events must build up a dramatic idea...Our ideas about hero-worship have changed. A man is worth as much as the ideas for which he stands...I saw Rhodes and his main opponents, Lobengula and Kruger, each representing the land in a different stage of development; the primitive man, the patriarchal farmer, and the representative of progressive capitalism spreading modern civilization....Of course the screen must make them meet, personally and more dramatically than they really did. To represent the truth of the ideas, not the similarity of faces and the exact order of events was the object...¹

The artistic imagination, although to a great extent historically determined, is not entirely constructed from political determinants; technological developments as well as philosophical and cultural conventions, many of which were imported into Britain, also need to be taken into consideration. There were certainly those who considered that they were arguing for peace. William Cameron Menzies, according to Oliver Baldwin, considered that *Things to Come* would 'be a great argument against war, for it will show the terrible consequences....' although he added wryly, 'I'm afraid I have yet to know the nation that thinks of the consequences'.² David Mellor, who sees the film displaying the conflicts in British society of the period, points out

When he had visited Germany in 1929, the art critic William Gaunt believed that architects and designers like Erich Mendelsohn (sic) were forming a Wellsian caste of 'intellectual samurai' to build a new future order. The theme of the totally designed environment was given a political inflection by a *Punch* cartoon of 1932 which showed John Bull dithering while a futuristic, black-shirted Mussolini pored over models of a reconstructed Rome. When Cabal, the aviator in the Korda film of Wells' *The Shape of Things to Come* (1935) — for which John Armstrong of Unit one had done designs — he appears dressed in a uniform close to that of the Blackshirts of the British Union of Fascists ... Thus Unit 1's attempt to seize an image of the future from a strongpoint, to break with a conserving and decaying order, was symptomatic of certain other areas in British culture in that moment of 1932-5.³

1 Letter, *The Times*, 13 April 1936. A few days later, Michael Balcon was also defending the dramatic function of historical inaccuracies; see letter, *The Times*, 20 April 1936.

2 Oliver Baldwin, *Picturegoer*, 17 Aug. 1935. Oliver Baldwin = Viscount Corvedale, (1899-1958), son of Stanley Baldwin (later Earl) Baldwin. He was Labour MP for Dudley 1929-31, PPS to successive Secretaries of State for War 1946-47. In 1931 he resigned the Labour Whip to join Mosley's New Party, but left the following day and rejoined the Labour Party.

3 David Mellor, 'British Art in the 1930s: Some Economic, Political and Cultural Structures', in *Class, Culture and Social Change*, ed. Frank Gloversmith, Brighton, 1980, pp. 185-207. Armstrong only worked on the costume designs.

Mellor is however grasping at straws, for *Things to Come* had little political relevance and is more satisfactorily identified as a film with proclivities towards nostalgia and an acknowledgement of German cinema. Although John Hambley and Patrick Downing describe it 'a stunning tour-de-force of design' they also note that it 'owes something to Hunte Hasler and Vollbrecht'¹, the designers of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and, as John Baxter points out its model work is poor, '[Ned] Mann's technique proving unequal to the strain Wells places on it.' Lajós Biró, he continues, 'noted that the whole story could be just as well set in 1934 as 2054 Wells having failed to include any genuinely realistic technical advances in his scheme for the future'.² It was produced with an already primitive technology, well below the standards which were available in 1936. Its theme derives from a idea which had long haunted Wells; it is monochrome at the very point when Technicolor was establishing itself and Korda assiduously avoided direct political references to fascism or Nazi Germany until the outbreak of war. Korda's caution about raising political issues was recognised by Graham Greene; his story about 'a Spanish Government agent who comes to London on a mission during the Civil War and finds the war has followed him here', later published as *The Confidential Agent* was considered too 'dangerous' by Korda's 'outfit'.³ During the eight weeks of 1938 in which Greene worked for Korda, 'on what seemed an extravagant salary,' he wrote the story which, nevertheless utilised elements of his initial idea for 'the worst and least successful of Korda's productions' *The Green Cockatoo* (New World dir. William Cameron Menzies).⁴

1 John Hambley and Patrick Downing, eds., *The Art of Hollywood*, cat., London, 1979, p. 95.

2 John Baxter, *Science Fiction in the Cinema*, London, 1970, p. 56-7.

3 Julian Maclaren-Ross, *Memoirs of the Forties*, Harmondsworth, 1984, p. 25.

4 Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, Penguin edition, London, 1981, p. 51. Apart from the film being shot at Denham, it is not clear what Korda had to do with it and possibly Greene confuses the title with *21 Days* (1937), which he wrote for Korda and Dean. Although it uses Menzies, William K. Howard (uncredited) and Rozsa, *The Green Cockatoo* was produced by Robert Kane for New World. Not shown until 1940, it is not as fearsomely bad as Greene remembers it and from the story point of view is characteristic of Greene's writing of the period. A visually sombre

Undeniably, these films fail to engage with the principal European political concerns of the time. They are flavoured by them but not informed by any serious consideration of events. Clive Coultass observes that even the 'period' feature films like *Lady Hamilton* or the Shakespeare film *Henry V* reflect 'the ethos of a nation at war'¹ and whilst this is true also of the films from the 1930s, there is no sense of the Popular Front and no parallels to the developments in Unity Theatre, which in 1938, for example, produced Brecht's play on the Spanish Civil War, *Señora Carrar's Rifles*; neither does the feature film industry have any of the urgency of the Left Book Club. A film such as *Secret Agent* (Gaumont-British 1936 dir. Alfred Hitchcock), which might be said to be imbued by elements of 1930s politics² is taken from the play-version of Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden* and set in 1916. *I Was a Spy* (GB, 1933, dir. Victor Saville), which was designed by Alfred Junge and starred Conrad Veidt in what was to become one of his stereotyped roles in British cinema, similarly looks back to the 1914-18 war. It had been taken from a series of newspaper articles by Marthe McKenna about 'a Belgian woman who had been employed by the Allies in World War I in acts of espionage,' and was, even in 1933, running a small café near Brussels. In the film, she spends the night in a hotel with an Uhlan Officer played by Veidt.³ Balcon was later visited by a German diplomat at his office in Lime Grove, who insisted that 'no German officer and gentleman could behave in the way we had

thriller and in the exteriors especially there is a sense of threat. *21 Days*, also, was not shown until later.

1 Clive Coultass, 'British Feature Films in the Second World War', in *JCH*, Vol. 19 (1984), p. 10.

2 Peter Lorre, Lilli Palmer, Florence Kahn appear in the cast. Oscar Werndorff was its designer, Joe Strassner provided the costumes. Albert Jullion was its art director and Philip Dordé was responsible for sound. There is a sense in which all films evoke contemporary concerns and even Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête*, for example, is considered by some writers to be a parable about a beautiful prince who, like France, and her heroes and poets, had to live for years under a wicked spell. Thorold Dickinson supplies another example, 'in *Les Visiteurs du Soir* (1942), a medieval fantasy, when the Devil turns the lovers into stone, their hearts go on beating. And it this the Nazis saw no harm,' Thorold Dickinson, *A Discovery of Cinema*, 1971, London, p. 79.

3 Michael Balcon, *Michael Balcon Presents*, London, 1969, pp. 74-75. Balcon writes that the heroine and the author were the same person.

portrayed ...'. It was a similar pedantry to that which Korda and Viertel had experienced over their Empire films and, significantly, Saville, himself, denied that the film had any 'anti-war' sentiments.¹ In 1937, some play was also made by the trade press of a scene in *Knight Without Armour* in which refugees throw themselves on the railway line as a train steams round the corner, but no British film of the period has the immediacy of John Sommerfield's *May Day* or Murray Constantine's² political fantasy *Swastika Night*, both of which were published in the years before the war. British films of the 1930s from whatever source avoided the issue of Germany whilst engaging with the main societal demand of promoting the desirability of the British Empire.

Jewish Issues

British cinema was less consciously aware of Europe than has sometimes been thought. Official preoccupations with the Empire and the Commonwealth as a cushion against economic disaster and the BBFC constraints upon it encouraged it to seek a quiet life. Although the cinematic apparatus of the 1930s allowed scant reference to the émigré, the refugee, or to Jews, and reflected the discrete good taste of so much of British society, a handful of films of the early 1930s tried not to duck the issue and looked at the question of anti-Semitism.

Jew Süss, which Michael Balcon treated as a labour of love had had a chequered history; the silent film rights had once belonged to impresario Ludwig Blattner, who had begun his film career as an assistant cinema-manager in Lancashire and eventually ventured unsuccessfully into film production.³ His company, the Ludwig Blattner

1 Low, *Film Making*, London, 1985, p.134.

2 Murray Constantine = Katherine Burdekin.

3 Ludwig Blattner came to Britain in 1897 and eventually came to own several small circuits in the North of England, at one of which, the Gaiety, Manchester, the Duke of Manchester acted as house manager.

Film Corporation¹, was in financial difficulties from the moment it was founded and he was eventually forced to sell the film rights of *Jew Süss* to Gaumont-British for £6 000, a good price considering the sound and dialogue rights were not included. Balcon found himself negotiating with the playwright, Ashley Dukes², the publisher Martin Secker for the dialogue rights according to the book and with Feuchtwanger himself.³ In the end, the cost of acquiring them helped force the production well over its estimated of £85 000 and the film eventually cost around £120 000⁴. It was for Gaumont-British, a massive and expensive production, with as many of four of the Shepherd's Bush and Islington stages simultaneously in use and 214 technical and production personnel in continuous employment for five months.⁵ By the time it was about to be made, Hitler was securely in power in Germany; Veidt had already played Matathias in the screen adaptation of E. Temple Thurston's *The Wandering Jew* (Twickenham 1933, dir. Maurice Elvey)⁶ and Goebbels was determined to discourage him returning to England. Heinrich Fraenkel recalled a conversation he had with Conrad Veidt on the telephone to Germany when 'Veidt refused to discuss coming to Britain to play the part fearing that his phone was tapped, and negotiations were eventually conducted in an hour-long phone conversation between H.F. and [Lothar] Mendes⁷ at Shepherd's Bush Studios and Veidt in Prague.'⁸

1 Formed May 1928 with a capital of £250 000, £205 708 of which was issued. Its programme, which was cancelled because of the introduction of sound, included 'a special by Rex Ingram' in association with Gaumont-British and *Jew Süss*; see *KW*, 11 July 1929.

2 In whose play the sound rights were partly vested. A stage production by Paul Kornfeld and dir. by Leopold Jessner (who directed one film in Britain before going to the US) had been staged in Germany in Oct. 1930.

3 *Jew Süss*, ed., with introduction by Ernest Betts, London, 1935, p. ix.

4 *Picturegoer*, 12 May 1934, p. 30.

5 Betts, op cit.

6 Maurice Elvey had directed a silent version for Stoll, ten years earlier.

7 Lothar Mendes directed *Jew Süss* for Gaumont-British, *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* for LFP, and *Moonlight Sonata* (1937) for his own company, Pall Mall Productions which employed the editor Philip Charlot and the photographer Jan Stallich. An ex-actor, he started directing at UFA and had been working in Hollywood since 1926. He had seen *Jew Süss* as a stage production in New York and claimed to have brought the idea to Gaumont-British when Hollywood showed no interest. He found it difficult to adjust to the technical demands of sound and confessed to

Balcon would have been less interested in producing *Jew Süss* had he not considered the theme of major significance.¹ It was the first Gaumont-British picture 'on a epic scale,' wrote Balcon in his memoirs. 'I thought it was an important subject for its time but I had to fight much resistance on the ground that it was a "dangerous" subject'. The Ostrers saw financial viability as the prime consideration, and as their 'sales overseas were relatively insignificant' they looked to him for assurance that it would make its money back in Britain alone² and, in the end, a variety of compromises led to it being an artistic and financial failure. Balcon originally intended to use Elisabeth Bergner and Emil Jannings but they had to be dropped and, in the end, the film failed commercially, Conrad Veidt feeling that the natural audience for the film kept away because of the racial issues it raised. 'The Jews are too deeply concerned with the persecution question...to patronise pictures...that deal with the problem.'³ If Jews turned their backs on it so did everyone else and James Agate who was uncomfortable with 'films extolling' Jews 'at unbearable length' thought it

I W, 12 Jan. 1934, that 'Veidt and I produced some marvellous silent pictures.... I sincerely believe that I shall one day produce talking pictures that are as good.'

⁸ Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, *The German Cinema*, London, 1971, p. 143; Heinrich Fraenkel, *Unsterblicher Film*, Munich, 1957, pp. 100-102. Veidt was kept in Germany and Balcon was sent a doctor's certificate from Germany claiming he was too ill to travel and had to send a distinguished doctor to declare him well. Later, when Dietrich was making *Knight Without Armour*, the German Government sent over Mady Soyka to offer her a salary in dollars if she would return to Germany to make a film. Subsequently, the virulently anti-Semitic *Die Stürmer* ran a campaign against Dietrich, *PPB* 27 June 1949; *The Times* 8 Oct. 1937.

¹ Michael Balcon, *Michael Balcon Presents*, London, 1969, pp. 83-84. At the time he told a different story. 'There have been suggestions that there was a motive of racial propaganda underlying this production. That I can authoritatively deny.' See *FW*, 22 May 1937; in *Picturegoer*, 7 April 1934, Mendes is quoted as saying 'I have no intention of making a propaganda play out of this film. Nor have contemporary events in Germany influenced me.' As both Balcon and Mendes make the same point, it suggests that they did have racial persecution at the back of their minds.

² Michael Balcon, op cit., pp. 83-4.

³ *WFN*, Oct. 1936, p. 8. Earlier, with regard to *The Wandering Jew* (Twickenham 1933, dir. Maurice Elvey) in which he had also played, he denied its topicality. 'Our job was not concerned with propaganda or the production of a political or ethnological problem-film, we were working on a document which reveals the soul of a human being and his vicissitudes.' See *Picturegoer*, 19 Aug. 1933.

should not have been made in the first place. He was, he wrote, an ‘anti-anti-Semite’ who believed in not raising the subject and treated the film cruelly, arguing that there had been quite enough ‘of these Wandering Jews, Rothchilds, and Süsses.’¹

In Spring 1933, when Gaumont-British were in the throes of producing *Jew Süss*, it was also considering another Jewish theme from Lion Feuchtwanger which dealt with the fate of a German Jewish family after the rise of Hitler of power, produced by the impresario and producer, Hermann Fellner, but the problems of *Süss* and anxiety over the censor’s attitude to so topical a subject, compelled it to think again.² Fellner had visited Feuchtwanger in Bandol, France³ where he invited him to produced a suitable screen subject, as ‘Ramsay MacDonald wanted an anti-Nazi film.’⁴ Fellner sent down Gaumont-British’s ‘best man,’ Sidney Gilliat, who wrote it as a ‘narrative-treatment’, but Gilliat recalled that it was an impossible subject for the time and ‘I never heard another word about it.’⁵

Even while *Jew Süss* was in preparation Basil Dean revived John Galsworthy’s play *Loyalties* (ATP 1933 dir. Dean) for the screen. It was already more than ten years old and the screen version, the only example of its kind, had more than a touch of British middle-class anti-Semitism. The haughty Ferdinand de Levis (Basil Rathbone), is tolerated in society because of his wealth, but intensely disliked as a Jew and *Loyalties* is unusual in exploiting a mass of anti-Semitic cliché. Jews ‘stick together’; apart from working harder, ‘they’re everywhere’; Jews are both easily recognised on a jury and considered to be biased in favour of the Jewish defendant; de Levis is seen as a parvenu who is sharp with money; his membership application to

1 James Agate, *Around Cinemas*, 2 nd. Series, London, 1948, pp. 104-107.

2 The story was translated as *The Oppermanns* in Britain and published as *Die Geschwister Oppenheim* in 1933. A Soviet version was made in 1939, before the Non-aggression Pact with Germany, directed by Grigori Roshal.

3 At the Hotel Pension de la Réserve, which suggests the location of Eric Ambler’s novel, *Epitaph for a Spy*. Geoff Brown, *Lauder and Gilliat*, London, 1987, p. 50.

4 Sidney Gilliat, interview with author, 8 Jan. 1990.

5 Sidney Gilliat, interview, op. cit.

an exclusive club is blocked because 'you have to draw the line somewhere'. He is aware of the surrounding anti-Semitism and is contemptuously defiant, but when £1 000 is taken from his room and he is expected to act as a gentleman and not allow a scandal to occur, he is immediately confronted with a forked anti-Semitic challenge. If he fails to pursue the matter he, as a Jew, will suffer further humiliations; if he confronts it he will open a Pandora's box full of prejudice which portrays Jews as money-conscious. When he publicly accuses Captain Ronald Ramsey (Miles Mander) of the theft he is provoked beyond endurance when the latter calls him a 'damned Jew'; he refuses to withdraw his accusation and forces an action for slander. De Levis, as some already knew, was right all along and when the truth finally emerges Ramsey protests to his wife that he was doing no wrong as he 'was only looting a looter.' The contrast between de Levis, as an edgy unsociable snob and the comfortable clubbable and even lazy personalities who surround him makes him seem, less unacceptable than out of place, but the list of anti-Semitic slurs which he aroused in people are intended as irony only in part and, in the end, after Dansey has committed suicide, the audience is left in no doubt that de Levis, who is shown in a huge close-up walking past the camera, remains the cause of the Captain's ruin.

Whereas Dansey is both a womaniser and a scoundrel, he is shown to have a personal life with a young and devoted wife as well as a number of loyal friends who continue to support him. On the other hand, de Levis is unpleasantly and sneeringly arrogant and has little other than money to recommend him. Except for the acrid aside that his father made his money by selling carpets nothing of his family or personal life is seen or discussed and we are left with the assumption that his only bond is an attachment to a mysterious Jewish brotherhood. The rapacious middle-class anti-Semitism which *Loyalties* describes is shown critically but sympathetically without balance or contrast and the audience is left in little doubt that the turmoil which has been created is a direct consequence of de Levis being proudly Jewish and that he

brought it on himself.¹ These considerations probably struck a chord with Dean who finds no redeeming qualities in de Levis, but many in Dansey and his friends.

When *The Jewish Chronicle* criticized H. G. Wells for contriving ‘a new world’ in *Things to Come* ‘from which the Jews, as a body, were eliminated’ and in which he referred to this ‘antiquated obdurate culture,’² He repudiated any suggestion that he was anti-Semitic and had, he pointed out ‘a considerable number of Jewish friends — I may count Freud and Einstein among them — and I doubt if anyone will find me ignorant of the splendid record of men and women of Jewish origin.... I am always telling people that Defoe was a Jew — look at his portrait. I am inclined to give a large element in Dickens to Judaism.’ He found the ‘isolationist Jewish tradition’ which had irritated diverse peoples through the ages to be ‘mentally mischievous’. He had been, he claimed, dishonestly misquoted and asks, ‘are we Gentiles never to be allowed to utter any impression of this ancient, narrow and racially egotistical Jewish culture, except in terms of cringing admiration and subservience?’³ Needless to say, the *Jewish Chronicle* had the last word and considered the self-examination of the Jewish tradition which Wells advocated Jews to undertake to be simply ‘a pretext or cover for xenophobia. The truth is, Mr. Wells is really distressingly obsessed by this “tradition”....’⁴

There are no figures of the numbers or the proportion of Jews within the film industry and those who were sensitive to anti-Semitism may have exaggerated its significance. Nevertheless, those who were less so have certainly underestimated it. Dolly Haas, who had initially been invited to Britain by BIP to play a ‘trouser role’ in

1 Low, writes about *Loyalties* at relative length but has elements of the plot wrong. She writes that Dansey throws himself down a lift shaft, whereas he jumps from a window. The fall, which is a characteristically inventive example of Thorold Dickinson’s work of the period, is described by Low as seen through Dansey’s eyes. It is achieved by a series of possibly two frame shots of Dansey’s face, mixed against the fall. Again, according to Low, the impact is not shown because he would not have felt or heard it, but more likely it was found too awkward..

2 Watchman, *JC*, 29 May 1936.

3 *JC*, 12 June 1936.

4 Watchman, *JC*, 19 June 1936. Anti-Semitism remained repressed but endemic in Britain and continued into the war, see Angus Calder, *The People’s War*, London, 1971, pp. 574-578.

Girls Will be Boys (BIP 1934, dir. Marcel Varnel), describes its producer, Walter Mycroft, as a 'small German sympathiser, enthusiastic about the Nazis.' She found 'noticeable anti-Semitism in the studio', provided, she felt to 'test' her and to which she 'reacted very sharply' ¹ Berthold Viertel, 'another Jewish Wanderer' as the *Jewish Chronicle* described him ², had noticed it too. 'Here in England,' he wrote to his wife in California, some 'papers are openly anti-semitic. Only the Quakers perform miracles of helpfulness.' ³ Nevertheless, in spite of individual lapses of taste ⁴, resentment, rather than racism remained the dominant cause of hostility towards the foreign worker and producer in Britain and even the "parlour anti-Semitism" of much English society', as Richard Griffiths calls it, ⁵ found no equivalent manifestation in the industry itself. There were at least fifteen voluntary organisations for the relief of refugees, the most well known of which were, the Council for German Jewry, the Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe, ⁶ the German Emergency Committee (Quakers), ⁷ and the Lord Baldwin Fund

1 Dolly Haas, 'Interview with Gero Gandert', in *Dolly Haas*, ed. Helga Belach, Berlin, 1983, p. 16-17. After *Girls Will be Boys*, Haas returned to Berlin where the Gestapo interrogated her over her connection with the Jewish Hans Brahm whom she was to later marry. She had attended a Jewish school as a child and they were also interested in her own 'possible Jewish origins'. Mycroft (1891-1959), producer and screenwriter, was small, slightly hunchbacked and much disliked. Once film critic for the *Evening Standard*, he was responsible for Sidney Gilliat's entry into films.

2 Interview, *JC*, 4 Oct. 1935.

3 Quoted in Salka Viertel, op. cit., pp. 224-225. His involvement with the FDKB and his contributions to the émigré newspapers *Die neue Weltbühne* and *Das neue Tage Buch* were factors in the Home Office failing to renew his residency permit in May 1939. He returned to America but was unable to find film work.

4 Zuckmayer, for example, found 'lax, indifferent, cynical' people in London and Paris. After the Anschluss, one MP patted him on the back and described Hitler as 'quite a good chap - a bulwark against Communism.' See Carl Zuckmayer, *A Part of Myself*, London, 1970, p. 89.

5 Richard Griffiths, *Fellow Travellers of the Right*, Oxford, 1983, p. 83.

6 This important organisation with offices at 2 Gordon Square, London, WC1, assisted 'non Aryans' and Jewish Christians (people of Jewish blood or married to Jews). Apart from disbursing funds, it kept in touch with the Home Office on questions affecting entry, admission, and employment of refugees.

7 It operated from Bloomsbury House.

for Refugees, with which the film industry associated itself.¹ Elisabeth Bergner made a personal appearance at a screening of 'the Paramount-Orion presentation' of *Stolen Life* on Jan. 18, 1939² Eddie Cantor, priding 'himself justifiably on his success as a "schnorrer"' collected £100 000 in England for the fund for Austrian Jewish refugee children³ and over 3 000 'kinemas took part in the effort for the Earl Baldwin's Refugee Fund on Saturday last. The result of the 10% contribution from takings and the collections at kinemas will not be known until the end of the week'⁴

With the exception of the portrayal of de Levis in Basil Dean's *Loyalties*, no stereotype Jews appear in the cinema of the period of the kind to be found in the novels of Sapper and Dornford Yates, 'in both of which...upper class English types battled against an assortment of pernicious aliens, including Jewish influences in a gallant attempt to fend off the destruction of the country's social fabric.'⁵ When Sir Kenneth Clark, newly appointed as Director of the Films Division of the MOI, was reported as saying 'If we lose the war...let the essential non-British and Jewish element in the Industry realise what would happen to them', there were quick rejoinders and an apology on the front page of *Kine*.⁶ He had intended it as an incentive to the film industry, but had lapsed with a typical example of societal inelegance. George Archibald, a Scotsman, reminded Clark that it would be unbearable for others as well and 'that in the Film Industry we do not think of a man

1 It was an undenominational fund, administered through the Christian Council for Refugees and the Council for German Jewry. Others bodies, one of which was organised by the *News Chronicle*, for the general relief of refugees from the Sudeten areas, helped those from Czechoslovakia.

2 This raised £3 600 for the Baldwin Fund and other organisations. Among the eminent who attended were Sir Robert and Lady Vansittart, Mrs. Beddington-Behrens, Oscar Deutsch, the Brothers Ostrer and Michael Redgrave. Bergner had earlier led an appeal 'at the home of Mrs. Anthony de Rothchild', which raised £8 000. *KW*, 12 Jan., 1939; *The Times* 19 Jan. 1939.

3 *KW*, 28 July 1938.

4 *KW*, 19 Jan. 1939.

5 Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society*, London, 1979, pp. 214-219.

6 *KW*, 25 Jan. 1940.

as “non-British” because he is Jewish.’¹ George Elvin, in the same issue of *Kine*, considered that Clark had spoilt

a promising debut...by the use of a phrase similar to those which fall so glibly from the mouths of the leaders of the forces against whom the war is being waged...The ... ACT...would never support an allegation that those [foreigners] who do work here and have adopted British nationality are less good citizens...Similar allegations concerning the many Jews in the Industry is an insult²

Anti-Semitism ‘had only a minor appeal to the British electorate’ write John Stevenson and Chris Cook³ and there ‘was virtually no penetration of the trade union movement’ by Oswald Mosley’s British Union of Fascists.⁴ The authorities, whilst generally sympathetic to Jewish refugees, were anxious not to inflame anti-Semitic feelings or to run into conflict with certain professional groups and continually revised its criteria. In the end, the total number admitted from the Reich to Britain between 1933 and 1939 was the low figure of 56 000. ‘Special care’ had to be taken in dealing with visa applications when it appeared that the ‘real object is...to remain indefinitely...’⁶

1 *Ib d.*

2 *Ib d.* Elvin’s phrasing is cautious and leaves open the possibility that foreigners who were not naturalised by 1940, i.e. the majority of refugees, may be less than ‘good citizens’ and suggests that the ACT was not hostile to internment.

3 John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *The Slump*, London, 1977, p. 217. It was, nevertheless present to some degree within the establishment and Hore-Belisha, who had been Secretary of State for War at the outbreak of war and had attempted to modernise the forces, was convinced that it had played a part in his dismissal by Chamberlain. See Hugh Cudlipp, *At Your Peril*, London, 1962, pp. 77-80.

4 John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

5 Figures from Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe 1939-1945*, Oxford, 1979, p. 7.

6 213 94 150872 [1938]. Abstracting from Official records may make the relevant departments seem callous, but this is not the case and they tempered logic with realism. Leading persons in scientific or medical research, established artists, well established industrialists, non-refugee students and refugee students with places in higher education establishments, were ‘not be refused entry’. Whilst C.B McAlpine, a Home Office official, observed on 1 March 1938, ‘that from a financial point of view refugees are becoming steadily less desirable. A short time ago a refugee could count on getting about 20 [%] of his fortune out of Germany. Now he gets 8 or 9....’ This seemingly hard-nosed approach was tempered in the same memorandum ‘Sooner or later we come up...against the ultimate difficulty, are we prepared to send back to Germany a refugee who tells us, probably with truth, that he will be sent to a concentration camp ... and usually succeeds in enlisting the help of an MP in putting his plea?’ *Ibid.*

Rudolph Katscher¹ was issued with a one month visa.² It is a similar story for many others. The then young animator Peter Sachs,³ who had worked with for Georges Pal and Oskar Fischinger, came later, in July, 1939, when the refugee crisis was at its height. He and his wife were allowed into the country to work as servants for two elderly ladies in Worthing.⁴

Kine was quick to notice any display of anti-Semitism and drew attention to Arnold S. Leese's journal of the Imperial Fascist League. *The Fascist* attacked the trade journal *Today's Cinema*, which it saw as Jewish controlled.⁵ The newly established British Film Institute was 'to be in the hands of a gang of Jews and Socialists'.⁶ It argued that the film industry was organized as a sweat-shop by people having 'Jewish nationality'. The trade press pounced on these attacks, although they were hardly read and had negligible influence, except that the term 'alien' which was widely used in the writings of the extreme right, came to be substituted for 'foreigner', even inside the film industry. The book, *The Alien Menace*, by Lt.-Col. A.H. Lane, which was published in the early 30s, lists a number of film personalities whom the author considers to be aliens; it includes the Ostrer brothers, C. M. Woolf, Michael Balcon, Sidney Bernstein, Rudolph Becker, Ludwig Blattner, and Harry Day.⁷ If all were Jews, they were not all foreigners. The Ostrers, had, for example, been born in London; Blattner, although not naturalised, had been in Britain for 35 years.

1 Rudolph Katscher = Rudolph Cartier.

2 On 30 Sept., 1935, Rudolph Cartier, interview with author, 31, Oct. 1988.

3 Pal left Berlin on the night of 31 Jan. 1934 and Sachs joined him in Eindhoven, Holland, immediately after the Roehm killings. After 1938, it became impossible for him to earn a living in Holland and he came to England.

4 Peter Sachs, interview with author, 11 May 1989. It was ridiculous, 'a joke' is how he describes it. Sachs arrived in England without a word of English, took advantage of internment to smarten up his drawing skills. and volunteered, but was rejected on health grounds, from the Pioneer Corps, and eventually found himself back in animation, working for W. F. Larkin on films for the MoI and the MoD. They had originally met Larkin was making films for J. Walter Thompson in Holland and now had his own company.

5 *The Fascist*, Nov. 1932 & Jan. 1933. *The Fascist* was the newspaper of the Imperial Fascist League.

6 Ibid. Nov. 1932.

7 Arthur Henry Lane, *The Alien Menace*, London, 1934.

The Conservative MP for Tottenham North, Edward Doran, who had once worked in a minor capacity in the industry, was the one public voice outside of the film industry to comment unfavourably on foreigners in it. He constantly asked questions in the House of Commons relating to Jews, 'undesirable aliens', and moneylenders.¹ Almost immediately he was elected he was asking for details on the number of alien Jews granted entry into Britain.² In March, 1935, he asked the Home Secretary, Sir John Gilmour, 'whether his attention had been drawn to the financial activities of alien film producers who, having been placed in liquidation in their own countries, are now seeking to exploit the British public.'³ Both *The Fascist* and *The Jewish Chronicle* reported his parliamentary activities. He received short shrift in the House and his anti-Semitism led him into conflict with his constituency association. He lost his seat in 1935, the year, coincidentally, in which Willie Gallacher, the only Communist Member of Parliament before 1945, was elected for Fife West. But there were other hostile voices. In 1937, when Gaumont-British closed its studios Sir Arnold Wilson asked the President of the Board of Trade, Walter Runciman 'whether he is aware that the management...is in the hands of three persons, one of whom is an unnaturalised alien.'⁴ When the Very Reverend Canon P. Palmer requested his congregation to enforce a 'strict boycott [of films] until such "Jewish filth is swept right away."' *Kine* dismissed it light-heartedly. Palmer 'is an old enemy of films...The gentleman is getting his flock to pledge themselves to "stay away from all films, except those

1 Edward Doran (1885-1945): elected Oct. 1931, defeated Nov. 1935. He was far from the only anti Semite, however; Col. Charles Ponsonby [1897-1976], Conservative MP for Sevenoaks, 1935-1950, and P. S. to Anthony Eden, wrote to the Prime Minister, 21 Feb. 1940, with regard to the 'over-large Jewish Population.' He and the co-signatories of an earlier letter, he says, 'would rather hand down to Posterity a slowly diminishing number of people of British Stock than provide now (sic) material for the increasing the stock of Jewish or Jew-British population.' See 213 44.

2 HoC, 22 Dec. 1932 [273] 1239. Doran put a similar question on 19 July 1934 [292] 1239.

3 HoC, 19 March 1935 [299] 994.

4 HoC, 9 March 1937 [321] 962-4. This was a reference to the Ostrers. Wilson was quickly disabused by Runciman. Lt. Col. Sir Arnold Wilson (1884-1940), Conservative MP for Hitchin, was a fascist, but was killed in action. He was Chairman of Board of Trade Advisory Committee on Cinematograph Films Act, 1935.

which ...do not offend against decency and morality” — an oath that is perhaps not quite so disastrous to the Trade as might have been intended.’¹

Facing Up to Hitler

The list of major British films of the 1930s in which the European technician, producer or actor played a lesser role is small: *Midshipman Easy* (1935) and *The Stars Look Down* (1939), perhaps, but even the latter, which ended as an Isadore Goldsmith-Carol Reed project with Fred Zelnik as its executive producer had begun as a Max Schach-Karl Grune enterprise.² Schach and his associates utilised generally weak film material to create associations between authoritarian personalities and Hitler. It was an elementary notion to accompany the political inadequacies of the period but one in which there was also a component of self-pity. But, by way of illustration, let us look first at a film which was not considered as non-British. Karol Kulik, in her biography of Alexander Korda, notes that the documentary film maker Basil Wright described the romantic comedy *Storm in a Teacup* (Victor Saville-LFP 1937, dir. Saville) as ‘the first British comedy from an English studio...a film which is, perhaps for the first time, genuinely British’.³ *Storm in a Teacup*, however, is a good example of the way in which the European concerns in British cinema of the period reveal themselves through a network of different cultural histories and practices. It had appeared on German screens as early as 1931, directed by Georg Jacoby, photographed by one of the German cinema’s most important cinematographers, Guido Seeber, and featuring Renate Müller and Hedwig Kiesler.⁴ When in 1936 it was produced as a play by James Bridie, *The Jewish Chronicle* wrote of ‘the dictator-hero of modern times, the cheap-jack egotist who takes blistering

1 *KW*, 16 Aug. 1934, p. 18.

2 Grune produced only one more film, *The Silver Darlings* (Holyrood 1947, dir. Clarence Elder), edited by Max Brenner.

3 Karol Kulik, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1975, p. 208.

4 As Blumenfrau von Lindenaur. Hedwig Kiesler = Heddy Lamarr.

advantage of humanity's educational indigestion.' It noted that it was essentially a work by Bruno Frank¹ which had 'been translated from Central Europe to a Scottish seaside town' and that despite 'its innocent exterior it thrusts deep at the genus dictator, the pestiferous demagogue who has evolved of recent years like some noxious microbe against which the system of democracy has not yet developed a protective reaction.'² It was a portentous set of observations, perhaps, which, nevertheless identified references to Hitler's Germany which were explicit in the play and were introduced into the visual fabric of the film by Saville and his collaborators.

Through Ian Dalrymple's and Donald Bull's script it tilts its hat towards Frank Capra's *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, which was made three years earlier³ and simultaneously anticipates the populist subjects of some of the post-war Ealing films. Yet its photography and economical design exploit the European experience of its photographer, Mutz Greenbaum, and its designer, Andrei Andrejew, to emphasise the totalitarian qualities of an ambitious Scottish Provost (Cecil Parker) which *The Jewish Chronicle* had identified in the play. He is anxious to become a parliamentary candidate for a fledgling political party and is shown through a combination of design and photography, as well as the script, to have a strong authoritarian streak.⁴ At a council meeting he attempts an address, whilst behind him is an enormous tapestry of large muscular male; his speeches are full of bombast; he presents himself as having 'a sixth sense which enables him to see into the heart of his people'; his ceremonial welcome incorporates a fascist salute; he is photographed shaking his fist in a threatening manner. Andrejew's designs emphasise the 'rally' aspect of the meetings

1 *Sturm im Wasserglas*.

2 *JC*, 14 Feb. 1936, p. 48.

3 The reference is clear. Frank Burdon, a journalist, talks of how as a boy he would watch cars that failed to climb the hill.

4 Mutz Greenbaum and André Andrejew were photographer and designer respectively. Andrejew, who was brought to Britain by Toeplitz, didn't draw himself, but conceived everything in perspective and used, mostly, Ferdinand Bellan as his sketch artist. Edward Carrick, *Designing for Moving Pictures*, London, 1949, p. 37 illustrates a point about the standards applying in Britain by comparing Andrejew's designs for *Whom the God's Love* with photographs of the finished sets from the art department under Holmes Paul.

and the graphic modelling of the crowd scenes and the entertainment gallery episode, also, show the influence of European cinema.

Storm in a Teacup awkwardly attempts to combine a variety of specific and conflicting cultural practices. From the technical point of view it is, for the most part, successful, but the contrived and mannered writing fits awkwardly into what the film's credits describe as an 'Anglo-Scottish' version of the play and much of the direction is fidgety and characterless. The dialogue, which is frequently childish, restates qualities of the Provost's authoritarian personality which have already been visually established and its reference to the state bullying of the Soviet Union and Germany smacks of dialogue which has been lifted directly from the stage. Two episodes, in particular, stand out like sore thumbs: the Provost tries to force the reporter, Frank Burdon (Rex Harrison) to sign a false confession, the other refers to state eugenics.

Storm in a Teacup, whatever its faults, makes analogous observations about latent authoritarianism in British society. It offers a warning to British audiences that autocratic political personalities lie in the midst of its own seeming democracy. The films from CFC and Grafton Films, however, although they grasp at the same theme and apply high technical standards, lack any identification with Britain and fail, in part, because their location is clearly either the stage or the film studio and not outside it.

Max Schach, Isadore Goldsmidt and Fred Zelnik who had been associates in Germany, were the producers, Rudolph Bernaur and Fritz Kortner the main writers, and Paul Czinner and Karl Grune the leading directors. Max Schach had invited Grune to write and direct for Friedrich Zelnik at Stern Film after the first world war.¹ Grune claimed that it was watching the faces and gestures of foreign-speaking soldiers

¹ Schach's wife, Beate (née Schoch), had written film scripts and collaborated on Grune's first film, *Der Mädchenhirt* [The Shepherdess](1919). She became Grune's companion. After Schach's death they married. When Grune died in 1962 she took her own life and his estate went to the JNF Charitable Trust 'for the purpose of settling poor immigrant people in the State of Israel,' Will of Karl Grune, 30 Oct. 1959.

during WW1, that attracted him to the pictorial language of the cinema.¹ With Schach as producer he directed a film, from a Carl Mayer scenario, *Die Strasse* (1923), which established his reputation. Schach and Grune continued together with a long series of films, including *Schlagende Wetter* (Trapped in the Mine, 1923), which, Kracauer observed seems to have included a similar scene to that in Pabst's *Kameradschaft*,² and was later to kindle his interest in the A.J. Cronin novel, *The Stars Look Down*.³ Together Schach and Grune went via UFA to Munich, where in the late twenties, Grune was in charge of production for Emelka with Schach its executive producer. Schach was determined to produce expensive musicals,⁴ a policy he continued in Britain with a string of films without a single memorable song. 'Capitol's programme for 1936 includes...*I Pagliacci* (sic) and *The Stars Look Down*, both to be made by that master director Karl Grune....'⁵ He had paid a reputedly £18 000 for the film rights to the former,⁶ which was to be the first in a series of filmed operas. Early in Schach's British career, *The Times* identified the correspondence between the story of Karl Grune's *Abdul the Damned* (Capitol-BIP 1935, dir. Karl Grune),⁷ the rise of Hitler and the killing of Roehm. *The Jewish Chronicle* remarked cryptically that 'the whole of the political side is excellent.'⁸ Campbell Dixon, in the *Daily Telegraph*, thanked Max Schach, Karl Grune, BIP, and Adolf Hitler, 'but for whom it would probably never have been made.'⁹ In fact the allusion to Hitler, although obvious, is meaningless and Hanns Eisler its composer hated working on the film. He

1 Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, New York, 1947, p. 119. He had been captured by the Russians and later escaped.

2 Ibid., p. 240. Publicity in *KW*, 25 June 1936, for Grune's then forthcoming *The Stars Look Down* refers to Grune having made the first mining film saga, *Trapped in the Mine*.'

3 Originally a Schach-Grune project, when Capitol collapsed, it was taken up by their associate Isadore Goldsmith at Grafton Films.

4 *Der brave Sinder* (1931) is an example. It starred Fritz Kortner who was soon appeared in Schach's *Abdul the Damned* in Britain.

5 *KW*, 9 Jan. 1936, p. 111.

6 *KW*, 10 Dec. 1936, p. 20.

7 *The Times*, 3 March 1935.

8 *JC*, 8 March 1935, p. 52.

9 *Daily Telegraph*, [?] March 1935, undated clipping BFI.

had composed the scores for half a dozen important sound films in the early 1930s¹ and it 'was meant to ridicule the "Führer"' writes Albrecht Betz, with Abdul Hamid being Adolf Hitler², but Eisler found it a ghastly experience. In the summer of 1934, he wrote to Brecht that the film was

politically 'respectable', but unfortunately still rubbish.... After fighting for a whole day I had (for decency's sake!) to give in. I have never so much regretted not having money. I would dearly like to throw the whole rubbishy thing in the swines' faces. After a day in the film world the much-abused Skovbostrand seems like a marvellous paradise to which I look back regretfully. It is more loathsome than laughable, that's the tricky thing.³

Ernest Betts, whilst admiring Karl Grune's *Abdul the Damned*, saw it as having 'a fault common to German directors. It is cold in the way the work of Fritz Lang, Pommer and Pabst is cold. They are mental specialists rather than heart specialists...' ⁴ Although basically honest, it failed on other accounts; it was, like all the films with which Schach was closely associated, callow, loosely conceived, and frivolous. The same could be said of the English version of *Moscow Nights* (Denham Productions in association with LFP 1936 dir. Anthony Asquith). Graham Greene's now infamous review of another of their films, *The Marriage of Corbal* in 1936 asked whether it should be considered an English film at all, directed as it was by 'Karl Grune and F.

1 These were Victor Trivas's *Niemandsland* (1931) and Slatan Dudow's *Kuhle Wampe* (1931), two films by Joris Ivens, *Die Jugend hat das Wort*, and *Nouvelle Terre*, a second film for Victor Trivas, *Dans les rues*, and for Jacques Feyder's *Le Grand Jeu*. His first film score had been for Walter Ruttmann's *Opus III* in 1927.

2 Albrecht Betz, *Hanns Eisler*, London, 1982, p. 141.

3 Ibid. Letter from London, around August 1934, Hanns Eisler Archive, Berlin. Quoted in Betz. In spite of his unhappy experiences on *Abdul* he agreed to arrange the music for another of Karl Grune's films, *Pagliacci*, which was seen as the first of a possible cycle based on the worlds 'greatest operas', see *KW*, 13 Aug. 1936. Once more it wasn't a good experience. Eisler helped Brecht find work assisting on the adaptation of *I Pagliacci*. He was offered £500 but argued and was paid off. Furious, he tried to take Kortner and Eisler with him. Brecht had been looking for work in films but a scenario with Leo Lania (who had adapted the film version of *Die Dreigroschenoper*) about Semmelweis the Viennese doctor who had specialized in puerperal fever, was turned down by Korda, see *Current Biography*; Ronald Hayman, *Brecht*, London, 1983, p.186 ff.; Klaus Völker, *Brecht*, London 1979, p.210. Lania, who later made his way to America via Lisbon, had worked in England on Dupont's *Atlantic* (BIP 1929), see Leo Lania, *Today We Are Brothers*, London, 1942, p.240.

4 Ernest Betts, *Daily Express*, 3 March 1935.

Brunn, photographed by Otto Kanturek, and edited by E. Stokvis [sic], with a cast which includes Nils Asther, Ernst Deutsch, and the American Noah Beery.¹ Greene, who was courting the GPO Film Unit at the time, thought there were 'English technicians capable of producing films of a high enough standard to take their place,' technicians who had made *Song of Ceylon*, *The Voice of Britain*, *The Turn of the Tide*, *Nightmail*, and *Midshipman Easy*.² As we shall see, this was a continuing gripe amongst British technicians, but Greene is, anyway, wrong about both Kanturek's photography and Stokvis's continuity editing which are far ahead of almost anything that British technicians were capable of at the time.³ Nevertheless it is a feeble film, poorly written and directed. *The Marriage of Corbal* is, in the Schach-Grune tradition, set in a stage version of the France in which the costumes, the textures, and exteriors all take on the artificial appearance of the provincial theatre; the actors wear their make-up like a disguise,⁴ Grune's direction shows no grasp of sound technique and the

1 Included in Graham Greene, op cit, pp. 78-9. E. Stokvis should be Walter Stokvis. He neglects to mention that Allan Gray wrote the music. Greene writes, 'may one express the wish that empires would set up trades in which their ignorance of our language and culture was less of a handicap...there is nothing to prevent an English film unit being completely staffed by technicians of foreign blood. We have saved our country from American competition only to surrender it to a far more alien control....it is not English money that calls the tune, and it is only natural that emigrants should find jobs for each other....' His tone is similar to Grierson's in *WIN* writing shortly afterwards.

2 According to Norman Sherry, *The Life of Graham Greene*, London, 1989, pp. 587-599, Greene worked, briefly at the GPO Film Unit. As early as 28 Jan. 1936 Grierson "'sounded" him on whether he "should be interested in a producing job"' and, although he still saw the film business as a 'racket', by the 9 May he was producing *Calendar of the Year*. However, no producer's name is given on credit sheet, INF 6 .7 X/K 5742 and John Taylor, to author, 29 May 1990, remembers that Grierson produced it. According to Sherry, both Cavalcanti and Basil Dean wanted to collaborate with Greene on a film and he met Korda, who was producing the Dean film *21- Days* (1937) which Greene had written and was in production in May 1937. Sherry seems to think that Korda wanted to meet Greene because LFP films had been 'persistently attacked' by Greene and 'Korda became curious to meet his enemy.' He doesn't realise that Korda was closely involved with *21-Days*; he produced it and also directed a sequence in order to 'inject a more Continental atmosphere,' see Kulik, op. cit. p. 218. According to Sherry, the Cavalcanti film was *Went the Day Well?*, from the Greene short story, 'The Lieutenant Died Last', although it was not published until June 1940.

3 Amongst the best British technicians must have been the photographer Jack Cox and the editor Thorold Dickinson, but both lacked this kind of polish.

4 Asther's make-up looks as though he should have been acting in a film made before panchromatic stock was used.

actors stand, as on the stage in twos or threes, expressively looking towards the proscenium arch and the audience.¹ Although the film is set during the Terror of the French Revolution and the dictatorial style of Citizen Varenne (Nils Asther) can be seen as another reference to Nazi tyranny, he is actually closer to a musical-comedy representation of Robespierre, a victim of decorative symbolism. Marching citizens are heard singing *La Marseillaise*, conducted like the musical chorus and the film rapidly deteriorates into the kind of silly love story of the period in which girls disguised as boys become disturbingly attractive to the hero.

Bernaur's scenarios are tendentious, muddled and confused. Frequently, the films have a unified idea, but are devoid of an interpretable ideological base. He had been a well known figure in German theatre but could not work in English. Exile in England left him in a no-man's-land in which his film scenarios and screenplays muddle together continental and British themes. *Southern Roses* and *The Lilac Domino*² show clearly how deep the cultural isolation in Britain could be but even those films which are seemingly set in a recognisable world lack the characterisation, wit and irony of films by Walter Forde or by Hitchcock, for example and convey a sense of political helplessness: they are a self-pityingly defeatist partner to the policies of appeasement. Bernaur's was the original scenario for *The Stars Look Down* (Grafton 1940, dir. Carol Reed) but the collapse of CFC meant that he had no influence on the final screenplay. Whether it was used at all is uncertain, but almost certainly, the character of Barras, the mine owner, would have been more tyrannical had Grune directed it, although he would have taken on a symbolic rather than a synthetic significance. As it

1 The same faults are apparent in *Pagliacci*, which had virtually no movement. Kanturek tries to compensate by moving the camera. Kanturek's monochrome photography and the design by Oscar Weindorff (who makes a joking reference to Bertorelli's restaurant at Shepherd's Bush) are the film's notable features. Steffi Duna was pregnant and Kanturek had to find ways of hiding her developing figure. *Pagliacci* fails in a way that no Korda film would have done.

2 Both directed by Fred Zelnik.

is, Tommy Morrison, its co-writer with J.B. Williams can remember nothing of Bernaur's scenario.¹

Schach, characteristically, acquired the rights to Morris Collis's *Siamese White*, a novel set in the 17th Century about a 'fantastically cruel monarch.'² But there is a flavour of fiddling whilst Rome is burning. Bernaur's version of *The Lilac Domino* (Grafton Films 1937, dir. Fred Zelnik) and his *Mademoiselle Docteur* (Grafton Films 1937, dir. Edmund T. Gréville) for example, attempt to revive an already archaic tradition of operetta and simultaneously introduce immature and obvious references to Hitler's Germany. *The Lilac Domino* had been written for the stage at the end of WW1 but a sequence was added to the 'Ballroom scene' in which 'shadows of men dressed in Klu Klux Klan costume [are thrown] on wall' and its contemporary relevance is supposedly revealed. A musical progress report noted the contrast between the revelries of the foreground dancers and the Klan in the background.³ Any contemporaneous association which Schach, Goldsmith or Bernaur were hoping to introduce, however, is swallowed inside the ludicrously silly plot of a playboy Baron who, although close to financial ruin through adventuring and gambling, is trying to discover the identity of the masked girl with whom he has fallen in love. But it was a mess in other respects too; Grafton had originally hired Bryan Langley as its photographer, but once Schach became involved, Capitol introduced its own photographer, Roy Clark.⁴ Protests from Langley's agent led to the job being split

1 Morrison to author, 15 Oct. 1989. A comparison of the draft screenplay of *The Stars Look Down* with the film, reveals a significant development and transformation. The proposed ending, following the death of Barras the mine owner, who has deliberately risked the lives of his employees in search of profit, has the hero's mother, (Nancy Price in the film) visiting the Women's Gallery of the House of Commons where her son, David Fenwick (Michael Redgrave in the film) is making a speech. In the film Fenwick never makes it to Parliament.

2 *KW*, 12 March 1936, p. 39.

3 Scene 235a, additional scene, 28 Jan. 1937. Bernaur's name appears on the call sheet and he, presumably, appears in the film, most of which is a ball which seems to be celebrating nothing in particular, with music by Hans May and Charles Cuvillier.

4 According to Langley, letter to author, 28 June 1989, Roy Clark owed his prestigious position at Capitol to nepotism. Clark was photographer on *Dreaming Lips* (1937), a Trafalgar film made immediately before *Lilac Domino*.

with Langley lighting the sets overnight and to Clark lighting the day shooting. In the end Clark disappeared from the film and Langley finished the film alone.¹ Similarly, *Mademoiselle Docteur*, which is a reworking of an earlier version by G. W. Pabst, attempts to combine both, music and dramatic significance,² but in spite of a good performance from Dita Parlo as an elusive spy who is eventually captured, and photography from Otto Heller, it fails disastrously. Once more it is smothered by the assumption of theatrical decorative taste and unmemorable music from Hans May.

Bernaur also adapted a second Cronin novel, *Hatter's Castle*. 'I was given "a treatment"' writes Rodney Ackland, with typical disdain for the film industry, 'already written by two eminent German refugees (whose names were to be used inconspicuously in the credits), and told I must work from that.'³ This heavy irony is a reminder that both the names of Paul Merzbach and Bernaur figure above his and his account does not square with the credits in which he is credited with both the scenario and dialogue and the screenplay is attributed to Bernaur and Merzbach,⁴ but he displays a literalness and was baffled as to why why Cronin's novel should have been substantially re-shaped for the screen. 'The German treatment was, to my mind, a travesty of Cronin's story.' Ackland, who had been described as the English Chekhov, was expected to produce lively dialogue and was shocked that some of the strongest dramatic situations — specifically those arising from the incest theme in which the son and the father have an affair with the same women — were diluted or dropped entirely.⁵ In fact the son is entirely eliminated from the film version and the

1 Ibid., Langley is only credited as Asst. on the film's credits.

2 Pr. Max Schach, Assoc. Prod. Isadore Goldsmid [Goldsmith], Ph. Otto Heller, Adaptation Rudolph Bernaur from story by Irmgard von Cube and George Neveux, Des. Oscar Werndorff, Music Hans May, Cast includes Dita Parlo and Erich von Stroheim.

3 Rodney Ackland and Elspeth Grant, *The Celluloid Mistress*, London, 1954, p. 121. According to Ackland, the first two reels were reversed a week before its opening to lighten the action. This would explain why the film opens directly on the interior of the public house, instead of on the strutting figure of Brodie (Robert Newton) walking through the town which would have been more natural.

4 Most probably Ackland's contribution was to the dialogue.

5 For the son to take over a father's mistress was one of the long-standing taboos of British cinema.

young daughter transformed to a young son. Bernaur's and Merzbach's screenplay was not intended as a screen transcription of Cronin's novel, but as a moral tale as to how tyrants eventually destroy themselves.

James Brodie (Robert Newton), a sadistic and cruel hatter who erroneously believes he is related to the aristocracy builds a hideous Gothic mansion in Levenford, a market town near Glasgow, as a monument to himself. Whilst ruining himself with debt and drink, he treats his wife and family with brutal contempt and builds up a string of enemies within the town community, not least the owner of an adjacent iron-monger who is, perhaps jokingly, called J. Grierson. He is conducting an *affaire* with a barmaid (classily, but inappropriately, played by Enid Stamp-Taylor), whom he introduces into the household, and which finally causes the death of his already terminally sick wife. In the process of losing everything, he throws his pregnant daughter (Deborah Kerr) from the house and refuses an offer to buy-out his failing business. There are compressions and changes from the novel which, in spite of Ackland's complaints, do not damage the story, although the casting of the Emlyn Williams as the sly Dennis, an ex-lover of the father's mistress and the callous seducer of Brodie's daughter, Mary, makes one wonder if Goldsmith or his team could distinguish between a Scottish and a Welsh accent. To be sure, there is a hint that Dennis may come from elsewhere, but he treats Glasgow as his base. As father of Mary's child, he is a completely transformed figure for the film, but, as in the novel, is killed when a railway bridge collapses, as he is about to abandon her. The Forth Bridge of the novel, however, becomes the never-never land of German studio-Scotland and Levenford, although probably South-East of Glasgow, is never clearly located. Much of the film, with vignettes quivering on the screen, suggests early expressionist cinema. The singular design, although transparently inexpensive, combines with the lighting to create a dark and threatening world, like the London which its designer, James Carter, had created for *Broken Blossoms*.¹ Above all the

¹ Carter had been art director at Twickenham. He also designed *The Stars Look Down*. Later he became an executive producer.

emphasis in the script on the irrational and dissolute tyrant, the mad-hatter who builds himself a grotesque memorial, catches the refugee preoccupation with what what was happening in Germany, and often to their own families.

A remarkable scene takes place when the bank manager calls to advise Brodie that his debt is about to be called in and that he would have been better to have built a house than a 'sham castle.' There is an immediate change of tone as we see the face of Brodie, shot from below and now clearly fanatical, whilst the underscoring rises to accentuate his developing fantasy. 'Sham castle? Aye, that's what it is to you, just bricks and mortar and heaps of stone, but to me it is the realization of a dream' Paintings hang at a crazy angle, the shadows get longer and when his son shoots himself, Brodie is finally compelled to recognize that his 'dream' has been the cause of his ruin and destroys everything in a fit of blazing and drunken insanity. Ironically, the funeral service takes place in a high-vaulted church, not dissimilar to his conception of a temple to his own importance and the minister describes him as 'a man who was made of the stuff of which the great tyrants of history are made.' It was another film about Hitler, but like all the films from the Capitol camp, it was a film outside of a programme and offered no analysis of authoritarianism or fascism. Brodie acts alone without an ideological superstructure, without reason and without supporters or friends. Whilst it reflected the desperation of the refugee is displayed no grasp of political realities and displays a false analogy. The victims of the monstrous Brodie are impotent in the wake of his tyranny and make no attempt to unite in a challenge to his inflated sense of power. They remain ineffectual whilst he destroys himself.

The Friendly Alien

There are few examples in British films of the émigré as a welcome guest in Britain. The 1936 remake of D.W. Griffith's 1919 *Broken Blossoms* shows how the experience of the émigré can be closely reflected in the films of the period. A

comparison of the two versions is especially instructive as Griffith's original film served partly as the base from which the fresh screenplay was written. There was some speculation that Griffith himself would direct it and he did, indeed, travel to England. But in the end it became the first film of the émigré theatre director Hans Brahm, who, under the name John Brahm had Hollywood and television careers. Brahm was the nephew of Otto Brahm, the most important theatre producer in Germany before Max Reinhardt.¹ He began as a light comedian and in 1918, whilst still in his early twenties and became one of the first string directors of the Burgtheater, Vienna in 1930 where he produced works by major European playwrights including Ferenc Molnar and Arthur Schnitzler. After a period as one of the leading directors at the Deutsches Künstlertheater, he moved to the Lessing Theater. After the rise of Hitler, he left for Paris arriving in England in 1935; like others he spoke no English. An agent's introduction to Julius Hagen enabled him to get two free meals a day and watch Henry Edwards directing *Squibs* (1935) at Twickenham. He received a crash course in film making and was soon working on Edwards's next film, *Scrooge*, as a screen writer, editor and production supervisor.² 'They made me a producer, because I didn't know anything about pictures,' Brahm told the American journalist, Eileen Creelman.³ When Griffith dropped out of *Broken Blossoms*, Hagen was stuck and gave him his chance.

Brahm's future wife, Dolly Haas,⁴ played Lucy Burrows, and the film was shot by Curt Courant, who had worked with Jean Renoir and Marcel Carné. It is, therefore, possible to account for at least some of the differences between the two films.

Brahm's version, designed by Twickenham's chief designer, James Carter, conveys a distinctly German vision of London, close to that of Andrejew's compositions for

1 The founder of German naturalistic theatre.

2 *NY Sun*, 22 March 1939. Brahm was also production supervisor for *The Last Journey* (dir. Bernard Vorhaus).

3 *Ibid.*

4 Writers have often assumed that they were married at this time, but they were actually married later, at Tijuana, Baja, California, in 1937. They were divorced four years later.

Dreigroschenoper and generated a mood which suggests that Fritz Lang's films had been carefully studied. The crowd scenes, with their sense of mob violence and with figures, especially women, screaming out that the little Chinese missionary is a spy, suggests the same influence.

In Griffith's version, the long and delicate opening shows the Chinese Buddhist as being convinced of the need to travel to Europe as a missionary, when he is confronted by a group of brawling sailors. The journey is not shown at all and neither is his whole period of adjustment to living in the slums of Limehouse, which covers many years. In Brahm's version, from Emlyn Williams's screenplay, the violence is experienced only in England and it is directed at him as an unwelcome foreigner. His arrival at Tilbury is conventionally wet and his clothes are quickly spoiled. The English take advantage of him, he is soon tricked out of his money, he experiences racial abuse, and is unjustifiably sent to prison for inciting a disturbance. The magistrate makes the recommendation that, after serving his sentence, he returns home. The parallels are unmistakable. He never settles happily in England. Later, a man enters the shop in which the disillusioned missionary is working and, once it is translated for him, chortles over a Chinese proverb. 'Some of these foreigners have good sense' he observes as he leaves. Artistically it is no match for Griffith's film, but it is extremely close to the experience of the refugee from Europe.¹

Prejudice was undeniable present in British institutions. Marion Berghahn points out that the situation for musicians was no easier

Perhaps no other group has made, over time, such an impact on British cultural life as musicians from Germany and Austria..... Again, the famous ones were at an advantage Younger and less well-known artists were normally not allowed to accept engagements; often it was only after the war, after naturalization, that they were able to take up music as a profession again. But even then, it was not

¹ Both Brahm and Haas went to Hollywood after this. Brahm became one of its survivors. His reputation as a film-noir craftsman was made with *The Lodger* (1944) and *Hangover Square* (1944) which are both set, as was *Broken Blossoms*, in a Hollywood-Berlin idea of London. Columbia had really only wanted Dolly Haas and brought Brahm along 'just because he might be useful in advising her about pictures,' but as at Twickenham, he was soon volunteering to direct, whilst they found that they didn't know how to use Haas.

easy...since anti-alienism pervaded the world of music just as strongly as other British institutions.’¹

This prejudice is barely touched upon in British cinema of the period and few films capture the cheerful and cynical opportunism towards refugees which Guy Morgan captures in a sentence of his original story for *Night Beat* (British Lion 1947, dir. Harold Huth). Set in London shortly after 1945, there is remarkably little bomb damage, but great disparities between those who fought and those who were able to line their pockets during the war. Felix Fenton (Maxwell Reed), a spiv, who avoided conscription and scratched his way up to own a grand night club comparable to the Café de Paris casually explains that he acquired it ‘cheap when the owner left under escort for the Isle of Man.’ He had snapped it up when its owner, almost certainly a refugee, had been interned. Thus improbity which was widely condemned by official sources during the war was simultaneously recognised as a component part of middle-class existence. Not only is Fenton an opportunist but his clients and customers are similarly unprincipled and fail to examine the moral consequences of their actions.

On the other hand, Beppie Leemans, the young Dutch refugee in Thorold Dickinson’s *The Next of Kin* (Ealing 1942) was a friendly alien. Her parents are in Rotterdam in German-occupied territory and spies in the guise of Mervyn Johns and Stephen Murray are able to force her co-operation by threats to her family. The theme that ‘Careless Talk Costs Lives’, which is the principal subject of the film, was paralleled in the posters of Fougasse wherein security leaks were usually careless slips to spies who overheard. The treacherous were either professionals from Germany, English with one German parent or cocaine addicts who traded secrets for drugs.² If a drug addict was an obvious victim for the blackmailer, no foreigner with relatives

1 Marion Berghann, *German-Jewish Refugees*, London, 1984, p. 103.

2 Phyllis Stanley and Mary Clare in this case. *The Next of Kin* is relentless in showing ways in which security can be breached and Beppie Leemans (Nova Pilbeam) is shown sympathetically, certainly less foolish than most of the English in the film. For a full account of the innumerable production difficulties and the making of *The Next of Kin*, see Jeffrey Richards, *Thorold Dickinson*, London, 1986, pp. 93- 105.

under German authority could be trusted either. There had been many films which focussed on WWI in which the enemy was German, *I Was A Spy* and *The Spy in Black* for example, but they were diversions and by the outbreak of the war, British xenophobia elaborated the search for the enemy within. The cinema had already found its touch with the jingoistic adaptation of Edgar Wallace's *The Four Just Men* (Ealing/CAPAD 1939, dir. Walter Forde) in which Sir Hamar Ryman, (Alan Napier) is a pacifist, even an appeaser of the Chamberlain variety. Somehow, he is both a senior and independent opposition front bench figure and a 'darling' of the constituencies who gives grand speeches in the House and is able to tame the quarrelsome crowds at by-election street meetings. But, he turns out to be even worse than an appeaser; he is a traitor who has been peace-mongering to sell the country down the river, block the Suez Canal and cripple the Empire. There are clues, of course, garbled hints come over the telephone from Italy, and one of their key suspects is thrown down a lift shaft, but there is nothing incriminating to point to Ryman as the traitor. The team of patriots, led by the proprietor of a fashion house, Leon Poiccard (Francis L. Sullivan), is incredulous as the evidence mounts against him, but the damning proof of his perfidious nature comes when it is revealed that the great patriot is the child of foreign parents. It was the kind of thinking that, after the fall of Belgium and Holland, led to mass internment of Germans and Italians in 1940.

'The Accent Actor'

Although the technician, the designer, and even the director and producer could continue to work in Britain with only partial English, the actor was in a less fortunate position. When the lighting cameraman Günther Krampf and Criterion Film Productions found themselves in an action for damages brought by one of its crowd artists, Krampf, who 'stated that he was an Austrian citizen', was able to give his

evidence in German.¹ René Clair, whom Korda invited to England to direct *The Ghost* *Ghost West*, knew no English and wrote the scenario in French prior to making the journey.² Paul Czinner only slowly learnt to speak English. 'After twenty years in the United States and Britain, he still pronounces his vowels so painstakingly that his words are drawn out,' wrote one commentator in the late 1950s.³ 'I speak so bad English', said Filippo Del Giudice, the 'fabulous' flamboyant Executive Producer, and managing director of Two Cities Films⁴. 'My name — nobody can pronounce 'im — Del Joo-d'chee... I do not matter.'⁵ Yet he was at once 'the architect of British film renaissance'⁶ and 'a big spender with large domestic staffs, motor cars, and a huge entertainment account' whose films had to make a small fortune before they could show a profit.⁷ When Leontine Sagan, the director of *Mädchen in Uniform*, was making *Men of Tomorrow* for Pommer and Korda in 1932, with Merle Oberon, Robert Donat, Emlyn Williams, and Joan Gardner, she complained 'that they were so

1 *The Times*, 24 Oct. 1936. Krampf was contracted to Gaumont-British and lent to Criterion for their first film. This was the first ever action over 'Klieg-eye', a form of conjunctivitis. Criterion lost the case, but Krampf was deemed to be 'in common employment.' Criterion lost another case on this film. Akos Tolnay and James Bailiff Williams had been contracted to write its scenario, synopsis, treatment, and shooting script, but Criterion reneged. The pair were awarded £541.9s and costs for damages for the loss of screen publicity.

2 René Clair, interview with Beatrix Moore "Put Britain on the Screen" says René Clair', *Pictorial*, 15 Dec. 1934. Like Cavalcanti Clair did not improvise the narrative, nor did he construct it post hoc. He thought little of British script writing.

3 Unidentified 'Personality Profile', n.d. [1959], BFI microfiche.

4 Lord Grantley, *Silver Spoon*, London, 1954, p. 208. Baron Grantley (Richard Norton) also had a streak of extravagance and was involved in the £100 000 musical comedy, *Brewster's Millions*, which was finished by Wilcox (B&D 1934 dir. Thornton Freeland). He joined Two Cities in April 1943.

5 John Barber, 'Del for Short', *Leader*, 9 Nov. 1946. See also Noël Coward, *Future Indefinite*, London, 1954, p. 206 and Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1959, p. 227. Tabori describes an episode in which Del Giudice reduced a heated meeting to convulsive laughter by his inability to cope with British idioms. He had, by all accounts, learnt the little English he knew by teaching the children of Italian waiters in Soho, one step ahead of them in the manual.

6 Alan Wood, *Mr. Rank*, London, 1952, p.128.

7 Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *Friends, Foes and Foreigners*, London, 1957, p.178. Del Giudice purchased the rights to Winston Churchill's *Life of Marlborough* from Korda. Norton, for reasons of cost, discouraged him from making it in the middle of the war; see Grantley, op cit., pp. 208-9. The actress, Greta Gynt, remembers Del Giudice also paying Churchill £50 000 for the same work after the war; she personally saw the cheque, Greta Gynt to author, 20 Nov. 1989.

British they talked like typewriters' and made them sit through the Bergner/Czinner film *Ariane*. Three years later, 'Screencomber' in *Kine* wrote sarcastically that 'the scheme to adopt English as the official language on British film stages is not likely to go unchallenged.'¹

For others it was a different story. When the great German actor Werner Krauss came to London in the mid-1930s to appear in the stage-play *Before Sundown*, he knew no English and spoke his part parrot fashion. Unsurprisingly, the play failed and Krauss, who was already a fascist returned to Germany.² Conrad Veidt and Anton Walbrook had gone to Hollywood in the late twenties, but there had been difficulties with their accents. According to the actor Robert Morley, who worked with Veidt briefly as dialogue director on *Under the Red Robe* in 1937, he 'was a master at delivering lines.... He always spoke them very slowly when every one else spoke rather fast, and softly when everyone else spoke loudly.'³ He also knew about lighting and always carried a small pocket mirror in order to see how his face was lit, so that he could make recommendations to the photographer.⁴ As with Fritz Kortner and Anton Walbrook, Veidt's roles were determined by his accent. He frequently played a German or mysterious foreigner; in three films he was a spy. He was never to regain the allure he achieved in the silent cinema and *Kine* noted that he had always been 'a little pessimistic over talkies'. "Films used to be international, and now, alas, they are national," he lamented. His English is excellent "but my accent will always be there," ...like Jannings, he could always play a foreign part; but...[he]...is afraid the public may grow tired of this limitation.'⁵ And certainly, it did restrict him. His days

1 KW, 21 May 1936. Émigrés laughed at their own pronunciation in productions such as the 'Topical Review' *Mr. Gulliver Goes to School* written by Fritz Gotfurt and Egon Larsen (Lehrburger), with music by Allan Gray, and produced at the FDKB on 28 Nov. 1942. A refugee charwoman discloses that the reason her English is so good is that 'I don't live in Hampstead'. In the cast was the daughter Rudolph Bemauro, the actress Agnes Bemelle ("Vicki", the Atlantik-sender's 'Sailor's Sweetheart' of black radio propaganda), and Gerhard Kempinski.

2 He appeared in the notorious anti-Semitic *Jud Süß* (Veit Harlan) 1940.

3 Robert Morley and Sewell Stokes, *Responsible Gentleman*, London 1966, p. 89f.

4 Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April 1987.

5 KW, 28 Aug. 1930.

as a major star were cut by the combination of sound and accent. He had been promised a part in *Daughters of Eve* at a salary of £500, but nothing came of it.¹ He attempted to break the pattern and become more of an actor and less of a star for he had had enough of 'sinister or unpleasant parts'² and he expected to be playing Philip II of Spain in the Pendennis-LFP production in Technicolor of *Fire Over England* (1936 dir. William K. Howard), but it was made in black-and-white and the part played by Raymond Massey.³ His accent did not increase his flexibility as an actor and Balcon felt aggrieved at the accusation that Gaumont-British had not helped or advanced his career.⁴ Veidt, dissatisfied, struck an agreement with Irving Asher which would enable him to break away from stereotyped roles although, once more, it came to nothing.⁵ It was not easy for him to extend his repertoire. As late as 1940, one commentator remarked sadly that he had been ill-advised, playing 'an uninteresting cycle of everyday storybook heroes' instead of the satanic personality 'which no other screen actor can ever hope to rival.... Now, ...[he] wants to play a life story of Nobel, or Liszt, or Freud. He wants to follow in the path that Paul Muni has trodden. He wants to don whiskers and an odour of sanctity.'⁶ In Hollywood it was the same and he never appeared in any of the grand roles to which he aspired.⁷ For

1 *KW*, 20 July 1933. *Magnolia Street* and *Northbound*, a 'story of heroic adventure in the Arctic' which Thea von Harbou had been engaged to write were announced the following month but neither was made.

2 *FW*, 2 Aug. 1935.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *FW*, 22 May 1937. Apart from *King of the Damned*, Balcon considered Gaumont-British had done well by him, although he recognised that there had been too few films for Veidt.

5 *KW*, 17 Aug. 1939.

6 *Picturegoer & FW*, 13 April 1940. Veidt was always announcing film titles for himself; He mentioned films called *The Conjurer*, *The Modern Pimpernel* and a film on the founder of the Red Cross, Dunant, among others. Thorold Dickinson was working on a script on Dunant at this time and there may well have been a connection. Apparently seeing Paul Muni in *The Life of Emile Zola* which had turned him in this direction. Korda had announce a life of Franz Liszt in 1935 but it did not go into production.

7 Veidt became a British citizen on 25 Feb. 1939 and gave a proportion of his American salary to British War Relief, but it not correct that he was present at the formative meeting of the European Film Fund on 24 Oct. 1939 as is claimed in John Russell Taylor, *Strangers in Paradise*, London, 1983, p.146. Veidt was not in the USA. He sailed from Liverpool to New York on the camouflaged *Duchess of Bedford* only in April 1940 (not on the *Queen Mary*, as Michael Powell

Fritz Kortner it was even more catastrophic. His reputation, enabled him to find film work in Britain but the theatre was lost to him. Salka Viertel gave her impressions of the London of the early thirties, when she was on a visit to her husband, Berthold, who was directing at Gaumont-British. 'London was filled with refugees. Elisabeth Bergner had a sensational success in Margaret Kennedy's *Constant Nymph* (sic) and was acclaimed as the second Duse. Fritz Kortner and Johanna Hofer, Oscar Homolka¹, and many others were furiously learning English.'² She had once thought of Kortner as 'one of those ugly but attractive males women worship,' and now saw him as a 'distinguished-looking', much honoured actor and director. But he was unknown in England. On his arrival in Britain, 'accustomed to wealth and fame,' Kortner had been taken aback that a British immigration official seemed never to have

would have it in *A Life in Movies*, op. cit., p. 348), see unidentified American newspaper cutting, NYP, 15 May, 1940. He was there, variously, 'to arrange for release and distribution of...*Contraband*'; he was going to 'reshape it, bringing it up to date,' prior to touring and making personal appearances with it, see unidentified American newspaper clipping, 14 June 1940, NYP; he had come to sell it but was remaining to appear in *Escape*, see unidentified American newspaper clipping, 22 June 1940, NYP. It was mostly puff as the distribution rights had already been bought by David O. Selznick and Goldwyn for £45 000. *KW*, 23 May 1940, had described it as 'heartening news'. The budget for *Contraband* had been a tiny £42 000 and it was expected to earn £65 000 in Britain and Ireland alone.

¹ Homolka learnt his English on the Isle of Wight, taught by Captain J.M. Mason, 'a strict and formal teacher', amongst whose students was Margarita Stapenhorst, the daughter of the film producer Gunther Stapenhorst; Eric Glass to author, 20 Aug. 1987; Margarita Stapenhorst, interview with author, 12 Aug. 1988. Homolka, who had arrived in England in 1934, became a client of the theatrical agent Eric Glass and had chosen to leave Germany 'at the pinnacle of his fame there...as a protest at the treatment being meted out to them,' see Eric Glass, letter *Screen International*, 18 Feb. 1978. Glass promoted the difficult Homolka whenever he could. and old friendships soon took him into its cinema and into *Rhodes of Africa* as Paul Kruger. Its director Berthold Viertel, who was also a client of Glass, had directed him in his first film in Germany. (*Die Abenteuer eines Zehnmarkscheines* *The Adventures of a 10 Mark Note*, 1926). His performance in *Rhodes* was noted in Hollywood, where he was described as 'an actor of superior ability whose performance never had been surpassed by that of any Hollywood star....a cinematic masterpiece,' see *The Times*, 14 April 1936.

² Salka Viertel, op. cit., p.202. She must be referring to Margaret Kennedy's, *Escape Me Never*, in which Bergner played Gemma Jones. It transferred to the Apollo Theatre, London on 8 Dec. 1933. Bergner had appeared as Tessa in *The Constant Nymph* at the Königgrätzer Theater, Berlin in 1927. Korda had wanted to make the film of it with Bergner, but Basil Dean held the dialogue rights and directed it with Victoria Hopper in the part.

heard of him.¹ 'His Shylock and Othello were landmarks of the German stage,' wrote Peter Witt and he wanted to play them in Britain. No foreign diplomat 'who came to Berlin...who had any interest...in the theatre, would have dreamt of missing his performance in *The Merchant of Venice* at the...State Theatre...where he and Elizabeth (sic) Bergner played...to crowded houses.'² Yet, in London, he could enter the Café Royal unrecognised. When he 'dropped in' at "Lo" Harding's famous boarding house for refugees at 13 Cleveland Square in Paddington, he would often tell his "Spell your name" story which later on became a play he wrote together with Dorothy Thompson.³ When Lothar Mendes consulted him over the costumes for *Jew Süss*, he had to act as his interpreter with Walter Forde who wanted to meet him. Forde would have created a 'specially written' part, had it not been for his lack of English. Instead he offered him a part in *Chu Chin Chow*⁴ and Kortner threw himself into 'learning a language that I had never, until then, heard spoken properly' in time for an audition which was only three weeks away. 'I got my contract'.⁵ When Hubert Cole visited him 'in some trepidation,' on the set of *Abdul the Damned*, he found that he was already speaking English 'quite well,'⁶ but after eight months in England, he was beginning to realize that he would never appear on the English stage. 'I should like to speak English...really perfectly. My trouble at present is that I have to concentrate on the actual lines in my parts, so that I do not have as much time as I want for English proper.'⁷ He 'despaired because of the language problems and the differences in theatrical traditions'.⁸ Not only did he forget his lines 'but there was also

1 *Daily Telegraph*, [?] March 1935, undated newspaper clipping, BFI.

2 *Picturegoer*, 5 May 1934.

3 Pem [Paul Marcus], 'Stage and Film', in *Britain's New Citizens*, London, 1951. Lo Harding's boarding house was, for example, Lilli Palmer's initial residence in London.

4 Gainsborough Pictures, 1934.

5 Peter Witt, 'Cosmopolitan British Studios', *Picturegoer*, 5 May 1934.

6 *I W*, 16 March 1934. The Swedish born Nils Asther, also on *Abdul* as the Head of Police, was brought over from Hollywood and found Kortner authoritarian, even tyrannical to work with. He considered Grune to be a weak director, barely able to cope.

7 *FW*, 30 Nov. 1934.

8 Marion Berghahn, *German Jewish Refugees*, London, 1984, p.105.

the problem of style; British actors “underplay....Me, always striving to achieve the utmost in expressiveness was expected to renounce it.”¹ Kortner less forgot his lines than their meaning and although his language improved he saw himself as a ‘Sprachclown’² Perhaps with an eye on his own future, he advocated ‘British actors, Hollywood scripts and Continental directors,’ as the recipe for success in ‘British’ films.³ In Hollywood, as he had in England, he found that without the powerful use of the German language, there was little for him⁴ and he spent much of his time writing scenarios.

Dolly Haas was coached in ‘good English...and in bad English’, by the language teacher, Flossie Friedman, a ‘brilliant teacher’ who had helped many people⁵ including Francis Lederer, Carl Esmond, Elisabeth Bergner, Jan Kiepura, and Fritz Kortner⁶, but Haas had had ‘to work on this dialect [cockney for *Broken Blossoms*] for months. On stage, I would never have been able to do it.’⁷ Throughout her career, Dolly Haas was given parts which brought her from Russia or Hungary and less frequently from Germany. On one occasion her accent was supposed to be Australian, chosen because ‘the English spoken there wasn’t considered as good and true English’.⁸ Haas felt that it was the music in the language that made ‘the difference.’⁹ The contrast between the

1 Ibid.

2 Literally, a ‘language clown’, Fritz Kortner, *Alle Tage Abend*, Munich 1959, Berlin, 1970, p.14.

3 *WI N*, March 1937..

4 He was unsuccessful on the stage in the USA. Plays and screenplays were, mostly, not produced, although he acted in his own film adaptation of his own co-story, *The Strange Death of Adolph Hitler* (1943, dir. James Hogan), as well as a few others.

5 ‘Good English’ was necessary for her part in *Girls Will be Boys*, (Wardour, 1936, dir. Marcel Varnel), which was derived from Kurt Siodmak’s *The Last Lord*; ‘bad English’ was for *Broken Blossoms*. (Florence) ‘Flossie’ Friedman became Bergner’s full-time coach. *Broken Blossoms* also involved a level of research, see Dolly Haas, ‘Interview with Gero Gandert’, in *Dolly Haas*, ed. Helga Belach, Berlin, 1983, p. 20.

6 *The Era*, 12, Sept. 1934. p.5.

7 Ibid.

8 Interview, *Kino (German Film)* No.11, Summer 1983, p. 6.

9 On hearing Haas’s cockney in Brahm’s version, of *Broken Blossoms*, her co-star, Richard Barthelmess in *The Spy of Napoleon* ‘thought she must be English.’ In *The Spy* she plays a French dancer, the illegitimate daughter of Louis Napoleon, in a dreadful Julius Hagen production (JH Productions, dir. Maurice Elvey, 1936) from a Baroness Orczy novel. It was designed by A.L. Mazzei and photographed by Curt Courant and cost a mere £45 449, although a relatively high

British theatre-trained voice and that of the European was impossible to avoid. The 'the accent actor', as Paul Marcus came to call him¹ had to have his foreignness explained in the plot. If they had singing voices, as had Martha Eggerth, who made two films in Britain before moving on to America,² or like Richard Tauber, scripts were devised to accommodate them. Hitchcock specialised in providing character parts: Oscar Homolka, was an foreign anarchist in *Sabotage*, Lucie Mannheim was avoiding foreign agents in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1935), Peter Lorre was one in *The Man Who Knew too Much* (1934)³. Anton Walbrook was Anna Neagle's choice to play Prince Albert in *Victoria the Great* (1937), in which Paul Henreid also played a small part.⁴ Walbrook's part was written within a new convention; the foreigner, especially the German, could learn English quickly, but he could never speak it perfectly, and had to be frequently corrected by a teacher or by a surrogate. Wilson Kent wrote that Anton Walbrook

sum f r a film from Hagen. Haas thought it 'a frightful film' and everyone's talent is wasted. Barthelmess. Haas's dancing and singing talents are more suggested than featured and she has a definite accent. The opening reminds the viewer of a Max Schach production. Haas claimed in an interview, *Picturegoer*, 25 April 1936, that she was actually born British; *FW*, 27 June 1936, 1 *PPB*, 24 Jan. 1949.

2 *Where is this Lady?* (Amalgamated Films Association, 1932, dir. Ladislaus Vajda) and *My Heart is Calling* (G-B. and Cine-Allianz Tontilm 1935, dir. Carmine Gallone). *Where is This Lady?* was adapted from the German film *Es War Einmal ein Walzer*, which Billy Wilder had co-scripted. Married to the singer Jan Kiepura, he and Eggerth frequently worked together. In 1943 she played Hanna to his Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, which became an international stage success.

3 Lorre arrived in Britain via Vienna and Paris with virtually no English having left Germany immediately before the Reichstag fire in February, 1933. He had been a Brecht 'discovery', appearing in *Dreigroschenoper* and *Happy End* in 1929. In Paris, Lorre shared a boarding house with a host of other refugees from Germany: Billy Wilder, Paul Lukas, Friedrich Holländer, and Franz Waxman. In England he was given a virtually mute part in his first Hitchcock film He was quick to pick up the language and after a couple of parts in Hollywood, in which he slipped easily between accents, he was back in Britain with another, as 'The General' in Hitchcock's *The Secret Agent*.

4 Henreid, who had been invited to London in 1935 to appear in the play *Café Chantant*; subsequently acted in *Victoria Regina* and *Jersey Lilly*. He appeared in four more films in Britain, *Goodbye Mr. Chips* (MGM British, 1939), *An Englishman's Home* (Aldwych Film Productions 1939), and *Under Your Hat* (Grand National 1940), *Train to Munich* (20th Century Productions 1940), which took him to Hollywood.

created a precedent in Hollywood....he insisted upon always having a teacher with him 'on the set' to correct the slightest fault in his speech. This practice has now become general with the Continental stars. When he came to Denham, to play opposite Anna Neagle in the Victoria pictures, he sent for the teacher, who while in Vienna, had given him his first English lesson. She was Mrs. Edith Williams. Since then she has never been absent from the set during filming.... She has, in fact, been chiefly responsible for Anton's English developing into a most charming asset of his screen personality.¹

Mrs. Williams, it turns out, had helped a number of other actors with their English, amongst them Conrad Veidt. She saw to it that Walbrook retained a slight accent which differentiated his voice.

There was frequently a transition scene in which both languages were spoken prior to the film settling down into English. In *Victoria the Great*, Prince Albert and Prince Ernest (Walter Rilla) are shown in a castle in Germany. Albert is told that he must practice his English; he doesn't want to go to Britain with its dreadful climate and food. The scene has already moved from German into English. A dissolve takes us to the ferry on the English Channel; its passengers are experiencing a particularly stormy crossing. The whole sequence offers the traditional film-welcome to Britain. The princes look as if they have been violently sick, and sing in German to maintain their spirits. It has been raining heavily at Dover, too, and their clothes are ruined. England is seen as a most unwelcoming country to the German who is used to adorable countryside, delightful food, and the music of the great romantic composers. The scene is comic, a self-deprecating joke, but one which captures the experience of the refugee. Walbrook, as Prince Albert, is inappropriately dressed, he can barely speak the language, he lacks a sense of British etiquette.

The same development can be seen in *Heart's Desire* which was directed by Paul Stein in 1935 with Richard Tauber. Tauber was hardly the conventional screen hero in

¹*The Millgate*, Oct. 1938, p.74. Walbrook had been Anna Neagle's suggestion for the part of Prince Albert. She gives two different accounts. In *It's Been Fun*, London, 1949, p.48, she writes of 'having seen Anton playing with Paula Wessely in *Masquerade* [1935 dir Willi Forst]' In her other autobiography, *There's Always Tomorrow*, London, 1974, she writes that she 'saw a German Film *The Student of Prague* starring Anton Walbrook — here was our Albert. But could he speak English?' The second, made in 1935, is the more likely as it was shown at Studio 1 in Oxford Street in 1936.

appearance and invariably played a sensitive oaf, or tragic clown, but his singing brought him considerable popularity. Here he is charmed by a wealthy socialite to leave a Viennese Weingarten where she has heard him singing to appear on the London stage. He is obliged to learn a new language, and his self-appointed manager (Paul Grätz¹) leads him through some English phrases. He is sent off, at the railway station, by a team of children and friends who sing in German. As he leaves Vienna for London there is an immediate clash of expectation and desire. He is obliged to accept the matronly dictates of his new employer who is patronizingly amused by the English he has learnt from his phrase-book. When she expresses her discomfort at his smoking, he politely removes himself from her first class compartment and joins his friends, who are all crowded together in the second class. Second class or not, he is at home and is assured of a warm welcome, he begins the conversation with a shared joke – a question in English from his phrase book – ‘Is this a smoker?’ A few seconds pass as he enjoys his cigar and he begins to sing a song by Robert Schumann, full of sadness at the world which he is leaving behind. The countryside and the snow-covered mountains can be seen through the window of the train, blurred to emphasize his sense of loss. His friends are quick to bring out a hamper of food, but the scene is quickly interrupted by the English woman (Frances Wilson) who calls him away to the restaurant car. Delicious food, a rich language, beautiful scenery and comradeship give way, not to a shot of Dover with the rain bucketing down, but to a high-angle view of Tauber looking down on the unattractive traffic-ridden Piccadilly Circus. Essentially, the stories differ little from those films at the beginning of the

¹ Grätz, himself, arrived in Britain with no English. Although he had been ‘Germany’s character actor No. 1’, he was completely unknown to British film producers and ‘waited at the studio gates of Elstree three days running before they knew who he was,’ see *Daily Express*, 18 Feb. 1937. Within three months he had learnt enough of English to get by and according to Curt L. Heymann, *NYT*, 5 Jan. 1936, Grätz, developed ‘the trace of a London accent.’ His death in Hollywood in 1937 was featured on the front page of the *Daily Express*. In Berlin, his use of slang ‘found its way through the intelligentsia to the upper classes’ and in England, he was soon embarking on a similar programme. *Mr. Cohen Takes a Walk* (WB-FN, 1936, dir. William Beaudine), for example, which was written by Heinrich Fraenkel and Brock Williams and became the source for a typical Grätz popular song.

talkie era, *City of Song* (ASFI 1930, dir. 1930) for example, in which an English socialite (Betty Stockfield) makes a Neapolitan singer Giovanni (Jan Kiepura) her protege.¹ She brings him from Naples to London where she arranges for his voice to be trained, but like Tauber in the later *Heart's Desire*, he cannot settle in London society and returns to Italy, where his sweetheart is still waiting for him. On the one hand, it was an attempt to reach for an international market, on the other and certainly as time went on, films of this nature took on a different significance. Gallone, a specialist in operatic and spectaculars, was accused of directing a 'routine German musical romance with more humour and less beer than usual' in 1938, when the novel by Ernst von Wolzogen became *Liszt Rhapsody*. 'A lot of the picture is shot in Rome – very pleasantly, with broken pillars and wild flowers and period parasols, but with no purpose that I can see, except to advertise the strength of the Rome-Berlin axis.'²

One film after another has a sequence in which English and German are spoken only for English to be insisted upon; *The Spy in Black* (1939), Emeric Pressburger's second film for Alexander Korda and his first film with Michael Powell, has the obligatory transitional scene which enables the film to move from German into English. Valerie Hobson, in this case, instructs her German visitor in the English language. Korda, who had Veidt under contract, had found some difficulty in finding him an appropriate part. Pressburger, therefore, created one which enabled Veidt to be placed in an English film whilst retaining features from his roles in German cinema. Powell put it this way: 'I knew all the German Expressionist films he had done and...[Veidt]...said "...let him wear black overalls as the motorcyclist, make him a black figure"... The way he comes out is just as much the myth of Veidt as the myth

1 Produced by Arnold Pressburger, who made musical 'type' films in Britain, often of the bi-lingual or multi lingual variety, for his company, British Ciné-Allianz. He moved to America, where he founded Arnold Pressburger, Inc. in 1941. Notably, he produced *Hangmen Also Die* in America.

2 Review quoted in *WFN*, Sept. 1938.

of the German spy.¹ Pressburger makes use of the possibilities arising from a situation where one person speaks faltering English and the other speaks it perfectly. Valerie Hobson is a schoolteacher and a double agent, Veidt's apparent collaborator in the Orkneys. He is a U-boat commander who has just been landed on the coast. They make contact by a signal when she leaves an oil lamp briefly in an uncurtained window. When they meet, they establish their credentials by exchanging a few words in German but she loses no time in insisting solely on English and in correcting Veidt's pronunciation, especially of the word 'butter'. To some extent, the amusing exchange of pleasantries which takes place reflects Pressburger's own struggles with the English language. 'But unlike some other refugees, he set himself to acquire British interests and learn the ways of his new home. He became, for instance, a football fan; and would conscientiously go off every afternoon with his friend Wolfgang Wilhelm the screenwriter, to watch Brentford or Arsenal.'²

The Pressburger of *The Spy in Black* can be compared to the writer of his two later films, *Contraband* and *I Know Where I'm Going*, which also have a hero who is a sailor on shore and have protagonist heroines who are obstinate and self-willed. 'Contraband was a deliberate quick pick up by Emeric and myself,' said Powell,³ an observation which a study of the film supports, for it one of Pressburger's smoothest and least ambiguous scripts, which barely deals with his dominant themes of language and culture. Yet Pressburger's craftsmanship can be seen in *Contraband* to a degree which is absent in all British scriptwriters of the period. It combined touches of Capra's *It Happened One Night* with features of a Hitchcock thriller, yet even Hitchcock, at this stage in his career, does not achieve the same quality of suggestive interplay that Pressburger achieves in one of his minor films.⁴ Mrs. Sorenson (Valerie

1 Michael Powell, interview with author, 22 Sept. 1970, in Kevin Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, London 1971.

2 Alan Wood, *Mr. Rank*, p. 153. In Sept. 1941, he joined the ACT; AfM No. 3593.

3 Michael Powell, interview with author, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit.

4 Compare *I Was a Spy* in which a sexual relationship takes place between the characters played by Veidt and Vivien Leigh. *Contraband* is more suggestive and exploits cinematic devices more skilfully. The film begins with Captain Anderson on the deck of his ship, looking out to sea.

Hobson) is a British Intelligence agent who poses as a divorcee travelling between America and Denmark to see her child. When she defies the Captain's orders to put on her life-jacket, she succeeds in stimulating his interest in her and a sexual game of 'catch me' begins. Interwoven with the comedy romance is a spy film in which the Danish Merchant Sea-Captain (Veidt) is unwittingly drawn into anti-Nazi operation in which the British agent is involved. At this level, then, the film is an invitation to neutral countries to join the Allied cause. But there is more to it than this. The pair are caught by Nazis, who are running an operation in London and tied together, prior to their being executed, the two themes come together; the war game and the encoded sex game reveal their similarities. Anderson had flirtatiously tried to discover Mrs Sorenson's sexual interests when she had teasingly refused to wear a life-jacket and he had threatened to clamp her in irons. We now discover the dangers when played by the wrong hands for she had previously been tortured by the Nazis for information. The subtext reveals two contrasting levels of a sado-masochistic game: one is harmlessly being played out by the potential lovers; the other is its perversion by the Nazi, Raymond Lovell and his henchmen, the brothers Grimm.

Hence, at the beginning of the film, when Mrs. Sorenson jumps ship and Anderson searches her cabin to finding only her stocking, he excites himself by slipping his hand into it and sets off in pursuit humming *A Hunting We Will Go*. She had been aroused by the threat of being clapped in irons but she needs to know that they are only playing. Thus, when she and Hardt are captured and do find themselves tied up by the Nazis spies it also suggests the development of their personal relationship and the ropes which bind them together are little more than a make-believe; not only does Anderson find it easy to slip out of them, he is careful to avoid hurting her. She is,

Apart from the themes sketched out here, it is possible to see its whole development as taking part in Anderson's imagination in which he is the hero in a sexual adventure. The credits interrupt the scene and when the film resumes we discover that Mrs. Sorenson refuses to wear her life-jacket.

however, quite enjoying it and in no real danger from the man who kisses her while she is still tied up. It would have been another story with the Nazi, who had previously tortured her in superficially similar circumstances. The life-jacket, which she refuses to wear at the opening of the film, thus keeping Veidt at a distance in the 'fetish' game, is abandoned as unnecessary as the film closes and falls to the floor like a piece of underwear. Hence the sexual and political themes of the film inherit the same space and offer a warning of the need to choose friends carefully in either game. Yet there is also a gesture towards Pressburger's preoccupation with language. In a scene in which the couple are stranded in the blacked-out streets of war-time London and Sorenson asks a cabbie to take them to a Danish restaurant called 'The Three Vikings', like the schoolteacher in *The Spy in Black*, she is quick to correct him.

The difficulties of adjustment to Britain and its language were never entirely solved by Pressburger, and this theme reappears throughout his career. *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), is full of imaginative devices and spans half a century; Anton Walbrook, as the German refugee, Theo Kretschmar-Schuldorff, the patriotic, exuberant, army officer of WW1 (Anton Walbrook) is noticeably down-at-heel and depressed by the outbreak of WW2. Theo explains, in a uniquely personal statement, which is spoken without interruption, why he has left Germany for Britain. He (unlike Pressburger himself), had nothing to fear from Hitler. When the immigration officer (A. E. Matthews) comments that it took him some considerable time to discover where he stood with regard to Nazis, Theo rejoins that the British, too, seem to have been in no great hurry. A slightly embarrassed officer says 'Quite right'; standing, as he is, by a desk, there is little difference between his role and that of Valerie Hobson's in *The Spy in Black*. He is awarding Theo credits for a pertinent response. Pressburger's comment on this sequence, in 1970, emphasizes the intensity of his feelings:

I who lived for quite a while in Germany and had many German friends, I wanted to express this feeling of mine that though my mother had died in a concentration camp and I was pre-conditioned about the whole thing, I always believed... that there were also good Germans...who did not have to go away from Germany but chose to go away...I had that kind of experience [in immigration control] obviously.

England is a very, very difficult country for foreigners to come to. Of course, when I came my intention was to stay in England but you have to lie straight away but you're not only dying to stay in England, you can't go anywhere else. And you know to the question, 'How long do you intend to stay here?' you mustn't say, 'I intend to stay forever,' ...You want to be correct in everything but you are forced to lie straight away so you answer, 'Six months', and then you extend the six months.... I believe that anyone that comes to the country under the same circumstances that I did cannot love Immigration Officers.¹

For Walbrook, too, who had left Germany in 1936 during the Olympic Games the film related to his own personal situation. He

was the first star to agree to be in [*49th Parallel*] because he knew what we were driving at. Also he'd actually been an enemy alien in England, he wanted to play in something to show that he was on the right side, which he was. He combined elegance with...tremendous authority.²

There are other examples of the sense of exile in Pressburger's screenwriting: *A Canterbury Tale* (1944) and *I Know Where I'm Going* are conventionally seen as examples of Powell's neo-romantic sensibility,³ but they also disclose Pressburger's sensitivity to being a stranger in an unfamiliar land with a language and culture to which he is unaccustomed.

In *A Canterbury Tale*, the stranger is an American GI, played by a real one, Sgt. John Sweet. He too finds himself bewildered in a foreign environment. Officially, the GI was a welcome guest in Britain and films and newsreels of the time emphasized that the British and the Americans were not separated by either a common language or by different social conventions. Pressburger incorporates a significant variation in this script and divides the problems of language and culture between two characters.

Allison Smith (Sheila Sim) is the 'towny', now a land girl; she has the language but not the culture; Bob Johnson, the GI, is, it turns out, a country lad and has the culture but not the language. The film which was shortened at the time of its release, has

¹ Emenc Pressburger, interview with author, in *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit..

² Michael Powell, interview with author, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit. Walbrook was naturalized only in 1947. Classified by the Nazis as 'non-Aryan' Walbrook had helped many others to come to Britain during the 1930s. When he arrived in Britain he had stayed with Rudolph Bernaur and his family.

³ See, for example, David Mellor, ed., *A Paradise Lost*, cat., London 1987.

recently been restored and is now greatly admired by enthusiasts for the Powell-Pressburger films but, nevertheless, remains an awkward and aimless film constructed round a thin story of a group of contemporary pilgrims to Canterbury.¹ They are side-tracked into attempting to discover just who is pouring glue over the heads of girls and frightening them from the streets at night. 'It was one of Emeric's most complicated ideas,' Powell observed, 'but the story itself had an impossible premise.'² It contains, however, some of Powell's favourite sequences, one of 'which was beautifully written by Emeric' and set in a blacksmith's workshop. It is one of the most remarkable in the film conveying an interest in the collision of cultures of which Pressburger was extremely conscious, shot subtly, without any artificial lighting by Erwin Hillier. Sgt. Sweet exchanges country experiences with an Englishman and finds that a common language has not separated them. Allison Smith, discovers that her very British experience in a shop is not of much use in the country.

In *I Know Where I'm Going*, which was made towards the end of 1944, a tiresome English girl, Joan Lester (Wendy Hiller) travels to Kiloran, a Hebridean island, with the intention of marrying a rich man, the head of Consolidated Chemical Industries. The elements conspire to prevent her making the final stage of her journey and she finds herself trapped on Mull waiting and praying for the storm to abate so that she can be taken across. During her obligatory stay she finds herself continuously confronted with fresh challenges. The language and the character of the people are new experiences for her and, try as she may to resist them, she finds herself drawn to the spirit of the island people and towards Torquil, a sailor on leave, but also Laird of Kiloran. The storm which has prevented her departure finds its equivalent in her tempestuous personality and, as it calms, she recognises that she does not want the

1 As in all the Powell/Pressburger films, Powell attaches his own cinéaste preoccupations to Pressburger's script. The three pilgrims to Canterbury echo Dorothy and her friends of *The Wizard of Oz* and their journey to the Emerald City.

2 Michael Powell, interview with author, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit..

marriage at all. Like *A Canterbury Tale*, *I Know Where I'm Going* was at one level a consideration of the question 'What are we fighting for?' and it came naturally to Pressburger. It 'burst out...I wrote the full script...in four days'.¹ Joan is transported to Scotland in a montage which rather conspicuously captures Powell's fondness for *The Wizard of Oz* (it also helps illustrate the relative contributions of Powell and Pressburger to their films). For Powell, it recreates a cinematic experience from an influential film; for Pressburger, it is a further attempt to exorcise the painful experience of his forced flight to Britain and confirms his own feelings of attachment to Britain. The moment Wendy Hiller arrives on Mull we see an interesting example of the way in which an émigré writer and an English director are able to harmonise their interests. The brilliant, almost show-off sequence of the journey from London to the island, gives way to a reflective sequence of discovery for the protagonist. Gaelic may substitute for English as the incomprehensible language in *I Know Where I'm Going*, but the same sense of bewilderment and difficulty is conveyed. Underneath the stand-offishness of the character portrayed by Wendy Hiller is a character lost in a foreign country. By the end of the film she has fallen in love with it.

The adaptation of Eric Ambler's novel *Eutaph for a Spy* also provides an example of the England in which refugees and émigrés in Britain found themselves. Essentially the story of *Hotel Reserve* (RKO 1944) remains the same as that of the novel, although there are some variations and additional characters. James Mason plays Peter Vadassy an Austrian² who left Vienna in 1933 to study medicine in France. With the exception of a few shop signs, the setting could just as easily be a charming, but run-down Cornish village. Vadassy, an amateur photographer, has saved for a holiday in a quiet guest house run by a German woman, Suzanne Koche,³

1 Emeric Pressburger, interview with author, in *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit. Pressburger, however, would have been unable to compose precise and idiomatic dialogue. It was generally written by Powell. On *49th Parallel* (1941) it was written by Rodney Ackland.

2 An Hungarian in *Eutaph for a Spy*, called Josef Vadassy.

3 In the novel her husband leaves to join the Czech resistance; hence the part is expanded and she takes over much of his dialogue.

which has an eccentric collection of French, American, Swiss, English, and German guests, all of whom are played with little respect for the nationality of the actors. Raymond Lovell plays Robert Duclos, a consummate ass of a French Lawyer, Herbert Lom and Patricia Medina pass themselves off as the newly married French couple, André and Odette Roux, but are Nazi agents, Valentine Dyall and Clare Hamilton play an American brother and sister, and Julien Mitchell appears as the Head of French Naval Intelligence. Only Frederick Valk as, Emil Schimler, a hunted ex-journalist and anti-Nazi whose wife and child are trapped in Germany plays his own nationality.¹

Hotel Reserve appeared in the second half of the war and conveys the run down Britain of war-time austerity more than the pre-war delights of rural France. It is undeniably, scrappy with cheap sets poor continuity and a standard of directing which makes it appear to have been shot off the cuff. Poorly written, directed by a trio of directors, Victor Hanbury, Lance Comfort and Max Greene², it also suffers from patches of appalling continuity, a consequence of an obviously small budget but it captures the sense of a country made shabby by war, with rationing and clothing coupons at the centre of its day-to-day thinking. The cast includes a host of refugee actors: Lucie Mannheim, Herbert Lom, Frederick Valk, Hugo Schuster, Josef Almas³, Ernst Ulman, Hella Kurtz and Martin Miller, none of whom was French. Mannheim plays, supposedly, a Frenchwoman, Herbert Lom, a Czech and the villain of the film, plays a German; other French parts are played by English actors.

Yet, once allowances have been made for this, the confusion of nationalities can be understood as an important constituent of the theme of the film which suggests less pre-war France than war-time Britain cut off by sea, but not protected from the war. Umlauts and accents have been omitted from names just as they were anglicised by

¹ Valk was, actually, born in Germany of Czech nationality.

² Mutz Greenbaum, also the film's photographer.

³ Amongst others Almas had appeared in two Fritz Lang films in Germany, *Metropolis* and *M*.

refugees.¹ We could be in England with the sea lapping round its shores. In a storm two-thirds of the way through the film all the guests are crowded inside the hotel whilst the thunder rages like gunfire around them. As the camera drifts across the beach adjacent to the hotel at the opening of the film the first snatch of conversation we hear is between a retired English army officer, Major Clandon-Hartlett (Anthony Shaw) and an American, Warren Skelton (Valentine Dyal) who decide on a 'snifter' as a contribution to Anglo-American relations.

If the Hotel Reserve and its guests can readily be seen as living in a beleaguered Britain, the police and intelligence officers are cast with similar consideration for the metaphor. Julien Mitchell, unquestionably English in his portrayal of the Head of French Naval Intelligence, Michel Beghin, is capable of the same kind of blackmail with which foreign spies are associated. When it is discovered that Vadassy has a roll of film which includes photographs of military installations, he achieves his compliant help in discovering the spy or fifth-columnist amongst the guests by threatening to have him deported to Vienna and the Gestapo. Actually, Beghin knows the culprit all along and is trying to panic André Roux into leading him to his controller, but Vadassy automatically suspects someone else, Emil Schimler, the only easily-identified German amongst the guests. Schimler, however, turns out to be a dedicated anti-Nazi and Vadassy recognises the hollowness of his ill-considered prejudice only at the point when Roux discloses his hand. Schimler had been the editor of a pre-Hitler Social Democrat newspaper, had spent two years in a concentration camp and escaped to Switzerland using false passports where, once more, he narrowly escaped being kidnapped by the Nazis. With the universal vindictiveness of spies and intelligence groups, he is being constantly threatened that unless he returns to Germany harm will befall his wife and daughter who are trapped there. In the novel, *Epitaph for a Spy*, this is exactly what he does, but in the film he shot trying to

¹ Réserve becomes Reserve and Köche becomes Koche for example.

prevent the Rouxs escaping. In the wake of internment in Britain *Hotel Reserve*, for all its weaknesses, raises issues that were otherwise ignored in British war-time cinema.

The character played by Valk is killed by a German agent in *Hotel Reserve*. In one of the most admired films of the war, the portmanteau thriller, *Dead of Night* (Ealing 1945, dir. Cavalcanti, Basil Dearden, Robert Hamer)¹ he is killed by a British architect. *Dead of Night* is also significant in that it shows that attitudes towards aliens had not changed over the years, and holds up a foreign cultural intrusion to ridicule. An architect, Walter Craig (Mervyn Johns) experiences a *déjà vu* when he is invited to a country house for the weekend². A recurring dream has foretold a terrible event. Each of the middle class guests, has a supernatural story or bizarre experience to relate but the most interesting member of the party is a smug, superior foreign doctor.³ His nationality is suggested, through his accent, and by a clumsy reference to his partiality for schnapps, but his desire to apply psychoanalytic method as a tool for the understanding of their dreams and fantasies make him a figure of derision. He becomes 'a little indignant', suggesting that 'an elaborate practical joke' is being played. 'No doubt you thought it would be very amusing to watch my cherished disbelief [in the supernatural] being shattered.' Each story becomes progressively difficult for the the analyst to unravel and explain and Craig dismisses Van Straaten's analyses by saying, 'I'm no longer interested in your opinion Doctor. You shook me first with your ingenious theories....' and adding 'There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed in your philosophy.' As the stories grow more complicated, the explanations become increasingly elaborate until no one can disentangle them.

1 Derived from stories by E.F. Benson, Angus Macphail, John V. Baines, and H.. G. Wells., with screenplay by T.E. B. Clarke, Macphail and Baines.

2 The name echoes that of Gordon Craig (1872 1966), the influential designer for theatre.

3 Van Straaten seems to be a psychoanalyst, but no distinction is made between psychoanalysis and psychiatry. He stands behind Craig as he begins to tell his story. His own story is about a ventriloquist whose personality is taken over by a dummy, not too distinct from *Caligari*. An interesting comparison can be made between Van Straaten, the psycho-analyst and the retired psycho analyst in Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1945), another film in which the lunatics take over the asylum.

Finally, when Craig turns physically on Van Straaten and strangles him with his tie, he is also ridding himself of hi-fallutin, foreign theory and scientific explanation. But it is not quite over and Craig wakes from a bad dream only for the story to begin again. The telephone rings with an invitation for the weekend.

Dead of Night is a film which offers a number of possible readings and Charles Barr has emphasized the reflexive aspects of the script which takes on the form of an Ealing story conference. He suggests that *Dead of Night* 'calls to mind a session of the Ealing Round Table with individuals "submitting" stories in succession to the dreamer (Craig) and the psychiatrist von Straaten (sic), then joining in discussion.'¹ Van Straaten, in this reading, assumes the 'role' of Michael Balcon, whom Valk physically resembles. Barr gives *Dead of Night* a parochial reading and ignores its wider dimension in the development of British cinema. As we shall see Barr's suggested interpretation is one of a number of possible interpretations, but it fails to ask or answer two important questions: why psychoanalysis should be presented as the tool through which each of its stories is debunked and why Frederick Valk was chosen to act the part of the psychiatrist?

Dead of Night suggests a 'realist' response to the expressionist cinema which was an anathema to the British filmmaker. Indeed, whilst it takes the same subject material, it rejects its implications. Cavalcanti, for example, was disparaging about *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari*, describing it as a 'ridiculous film' in which the 'characters are real, the sets unreal. It was confused. It lacked a style, coherence, rigour.'² Its central position in the development of German cinema dictates the British response to it and *Dead of Night* is close to a revised version which is best understood as an attempt to correct these supposed failures within a tradition which Ealing, in particular, was trying to establish. The house to which Craig is invited is reminiscent of lunatic asylum of *Caligari*; the guests with their supernatural fantasies are as much

¹ Charles Barr, *Ealing Studios*, London 1977, p. 187; Charles Barr, "Projecting Britain", *Screen*, Spring 1974, pp. 87-121.

² 'Alberto Cavalcanti' interviewed by Jim Hillier and others, *Screen*, Autumn, 1972.

patients under medical supervision as the shadowy figures of Wiene's film. The architect, Craig, then, in this reading is simply mad, like the Francis of Wiene's film and all the characters occupy space only inside his recurring dream, the psychiatrist and the guests being constructs from his everyday experiences of a mental hospital. The little England enshrined in the country cottage or the ward of an asylum to which Craig is a frequent visitor is insulated from the outside world untouched by Hitler's bombs but spoilt by the intrusion of psychoanalytic nonsense. When Francis turns violently on the hospital superintendent in *Caligari*, imagining him to be the insane Dr. Caligari of his nightmares, the doctor senses the possibility of a cure. In strangling Van Straaten, the architect goes one stage further and destroys an authoritarian father figure whilst simultaneously striking a blow for naive realism. Craig is annoyed and frustrated by his elaborate and complicated interpretation and wants to accept things at their face value instead of presenting them through the elaborate interpretation of continental theory.

British cinema has common features with other parts of British society in its attitudes to aliens, exiles, and refugees. The conflicts which it portrays both in its production methods and its treatment of subjects was only an analogue to a policy which throughout the 1930s looked for a way out of the European crisis by attempting to isolate itself from it, both politically and economically. Yet it is by no means straightforward and if the internment policies of 1940 were the opportunity for the press to bay 'indiscriminately against all aliens,' the effect of which 'was to create something unpleasantly close to "pogrom mindedness" among sections of the population,'¹ there were many voices against it. With undisguised disgust, François Lafitte showed how 'some newspapers systematically fostered anti-foreign feeling by inflammatory articles and misleading news items, and...this was done in many cases by men with uneasy consciences. Both in the Press and in public speeches certain

¹Angus Calder, *The People's War*, London, 1971, p. 151. With the internment of Italians, there were attacks on Italian restaurants and ice cream parlours and the *Hotel Review* 'smugly rejoiced that "the excessive Italianization of our hotels" might now be checked.' Ibid.

gentlemen whose pro-Nazi views were notorious in peacetime were among the loudest to clamour to “intern the lot.”¹ In terms of the wide-spread alarm in British society after the fall of Belgium and Holland, the film industry did not seek out émigrés for specially adverse treatment and Sidney Gilliat, for one, never sensed one whisper of it.² Leading figures in many fields were welcomed, but it is only in the academic sphere that there was general and genuine acceptance of the émigré from Germany and Austria and these examples help disguise the reality that Britain was, in the main protectionist in one form or another. When the Government was prepared to accept five hundred refugee doctors from Germany, the BMA forced it to reduce the number to fifty and refused to recognize their qualifications. The BMA provides an interesting analogue to the ACT and its method of war-time registration, mostly of refugees and émigrés. Refugee ‘doctors were finally admitted on a temporary Register of the Medical Council and allowed to work in hospitals, clinics and as assistants to British practitioners.... In September 1939 there were some 1 000 doctors on the Temporary Register.... It was only after the war, when refugees acquired British citizenship, that restrictions were lifted.’³ The thrust of British cinema and of British film criticism is similarly unmistakable and Dilys Powell considered that, by the end of the war, ‘semi-documentary’ film ‘had gained a hold over British imaginations.... The British no longer demand pure fantasy in their films; they can be receptive also to the imaginative interpretation of everyday life.’⁴ But we can now see that just as the end of war signalled the end of the British Empire so it marked the death of its progeny, the British documentary film. In feature films the subjects which had dominated British cinema in the 1930s remained at the centre of the industry’s

1 François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, Hamondsworth, 1940, p. 26-28.

2 Sidney Gilliat, interview with author, op. cit..

3 Marion Berghann, *German-Jewish Refugees*, London, 1984. p. 84 85. Among those who ‘must be regarded as prima facie unsuitable’ for entry into Britain were, ‘small shopkeepers, retail traders, artisans, and persons likely to seek employment, Agents and middlemen, whose livelihood depends on commission.... Minor musicians and commercial artists of all kinds.... The rank and file of professional men – lawyers, doctors, dentists,’ See HO 213/94.150872.

4 One of ‘The Arts in Britain’ series included in *Since 1939*, London, 1948.

marketing strategy after 1945. British cinema had advanced technically and there was a greater sense of authenticity, but world cinema had also moved on, and British films in comparison to films from Hollywood, Lewis Milestone's *A Walk in the Sun* (1945) or William Wyler's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) for example, still looked impoverished.

There were developments of course, British cinema was more serious for one thing and the films from Launder and Gilliat and London Films *The Third Man* (1949) are cases in point. Yet the team for the latter still retained its commitment to the continuation of the 1930s; it was written by Graham Greene, edited by Oswald Hafenrichter, designed by Vincent Korda and his assistant on the *Thief of Bagdad* Josef Bato. When Thorold Dickinson took over the direction of *The Queen of Spades* (World Screenplays 1948) from Rodney Ackland, he had all the previously shot material run through for him and remarked of 'its most extraordinary effect' for it wasn't like a British film at all.¹ A film such as *Passport to Pimlico*, which George Perry describes as 'an amusing attack on a regulation strangled Britain,'² retains the populist qualities of the Gracie Fields comedies of the 1930s. In other respects the mix of European and British talent was to survive the immediate post-war years. The 'films of Empire' had gone, to be replaced by the occasional excursion into the Commonwealth. Dickinson's troubled *Men of Two Worlds*, the Powell-Pressburger *Black Narcissus*, Harry Watt's *Eureka Stockade*, and even the showy Korda films, *Anna Karenina* and *Bonnie Prince Charlie* show no great break with the past.³

1 Rodney Ackland, *The Celluloid Mistress*, London, 1954, p. 210. Otto Heller was its photographer and Walbrook headed the cast. Oliver Messel's fussy design is sometimes thought 'atmospheric'.

2 George Perry, *The Great British Picture Show*, London, 1974, p. 131.

3 *Passport to Pimlico* was directed by Henry Cornelius, *Anna Karenina* was directed by Julien Duvivier, with both Henri Alekan and André Andrejew in the team, the Powell-Pressburger films retained their partiality for European influences.

PART TWO

British Domestic Cinema and the 'International' Film

Introduction

The cinema-going habit is widely understood as one of the great social activities of the 1930s and 1940s. In her brochure *Films Since 1939*,¹ Dilys Powell describes it as 'the chief urban entertainment' which had long supplanted the theatre as the great popular entertainment. Angus Calder puts the number of tickets sold each week at between twenty-five and thirty million, with most people under forty seeing at least fifty features every year. Yet, 'on average no more than seven of these films would be British.' Information and statistics on the period are anecdotal and unreliable, but in general and notwithstanding exceptions, surveys suggest that American films and American stars were more popular than their British counterparts. Certainly, there was resistance to this by some audiences and by some producers, but there were also resistances to British films. Peter Stead writes that, popular though they may have been, the 'British film industry was almost certainly a little ashamed of the Gracie Fields and George Formby films of the period and, realising that they could never become the basis of an internationally successful cinema, took steps to ensure that the London critics never saw them'.³ Even John Grierson preferred Hollywood's version of reality.

This is not the place to explore this subject but to point to some of the strategies for success which film producers in Britain explored throughout the 1930s and 1940s. At

1 One of 'The Arts in Britain' series included in *Since 1939*, London, 1948.

2 Angus Calder, *op. cit.*, pp. 423-4.

3 Peter Stead, 'The People as Stars', in *Britain and the Cinema in the Second World War*, ed. Philip M. Taylor, London, 1988, p. 63.

one end of the scale, producers sought protection in the Films Act of 1928, the Quota act, which virtually assured them of exhibition, at the other, there were prestigious films, produced with a combination of American and British finance which, to be profitable, needed to be successful in the United States. In between there were two other categories of film: those aimed almost exclusively at the British market and the so called 'bi-lingual' or 'multi-lingual' which aimed to reduce costs by looking to co-productions with non-English speaking production companies abroad.

British Domestic Cinema

'British domestic cinema' starred popular variety artists and is said by George Perry to have been 'modest in intention' but to have done 'a great deal to provide a common interest between the producer and the mass audience.'¹ In their social history of the inter-war period, Robert Graves and Alan Hodge observe that only 'one variety star rose to national fame in the Thirties – Gracie Fields, the singer.' They note how a 'conservative writer', Major Rawdon Hoare, described her in 1934 as the only outstanding personality who was providing healthy entertainment for the multitude. In 'the performance of Grace Fields', they quote, 'we get a breath of fresh air and an opportunity for some real laughter. This all helps to keep the right spirit of England together....' They write of her 'Lancashire accent, her humorous, long-suffering but optimistic temperament' which more truly represented contemporary England than 'slick Americanistic film comedies or heavily modern plays.'² This is a theme which Tony Aldgate pursues. 'It was [Basil] Dean's Associated Talking Pictures, more than any other production company, which provided the majority of films';³ they 'proved to be vehicles for the exploitation on a national scale of comic talents like those of

1 George Perry, op. cit., 1974, p. 72.

2 Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, *The Long Week End*, London, 1941, p. 297.

3 Tony Aldgate, 'Comedy, Class and Containment', pp. 257-271, in *British Cinema History*, eds. James Curran and Vincent Porter, London, 1983.

[George] Formby and Fields, whose origins were largely in regional variety.’¹ Cheap and cheerful as they appeared to be, they were, however, less inexpensive than is generally believed and when they made money, they often made less than is sometimes thought.

Gracie Fields most popular film was probably *Sing as we Go* (ATP, 1934 dir. Dean) and was written by J.B. Priestley, whom whom Graves and Hodge cruelly describe as the ‘Gracie Fields of literature,’² and, whom Stead reminds us, looked for a synthesis between the commercial and documentary cinemas.³ Aldgate argues that these films ‘reflected and reinforced the dominant consensus and sought to generate adherence to the idea that society should continue to remain stable and cohesive as it changed over time,’⁴ an indication of how closely they are associated with the myth of Empire. Attempting to establish whether the films were genuinely popular and profitable is less than easy: there is little reliable data and considerable hyperbole. According to the Basil Dean papers, *Sing as We Go* was estimated to cost £64 917 1s. 9d of which the stars were to receive £33 000 and Dean claims to have produced it, ‘our most successful Fields picture for £1, 500 less than its budget’.⁵ Yet Rachael Low reports Fields as receiving £40 000 for this one film alone. Assuming that she was actually paid this sum in addition to the fees for other actors, the total budget would have been closer to £100 000 and comparable to those of the more ambitious films of Alexander Korda and others.⁶ Either way, the estimated final budget of £89 425 18s. 2d. for

1 Ibid.

2 Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, op. cit., London, 1941, p. 298.

3 Peter Stead, op cit, p. 63.

4Aldgate, loc. cit., pp. 270-271.

5 Basil Dean, *Mind's Eye*, London, 1973, p. 206.

6 Basil Dean Papers; Rachael Low, *Film Making*, London, 1985, p. 160. Even if Fields did not receive

£40 000, the film was far from cheap. These figures can only be taken as guides as they are not strictly comparable to those of other studios. The films may have actually been more expensive. At LFP, for example, overheads could vary from 28% to 50%, a sizable addition to the budget, especially in comparison to ATP which used to charge only 5 %. *The Show Goes On*, for example, was budgeted at £38 361. 0s 10d [without charge for production, direction, or story rights]. Finished on an eight week schedule; the actual budget became £57 398 18s 6d., see Sir David Cunynghame Collection and Dean Papers. The overhead charge represented American

another Gracie Fields film, *Queen of Hearts* (1936), reveals how expensive British domestic cinema could be.¹ George Formby, Dean's low-cost replacement for Gracie Fields was paid only £3 300 for *I See Ice* (ATP 1938, dir. Anthony Kimmins).² Yet Dean's costs did not fall; instead of relying on the artist, which was natural to a man of the theatre, he began to look to improved production values. He had paid one of the lighting camera-men whom the ACT rated highly, Desmond Dickinson, only £25 per week on the Gracie Fields film *Love Life and Laughter* (ATP, 1934, dir. Maurice Elvey);³ two years later he was paying Jan Stallich six times as much on *Whom the Gods Love* (ATP 1936, dir. Basil Dean).⁴ There was, then, less of a difference between the cost of the more successful examples of domestic cinema and those of the larger scale internationally targeted features. The films were simply being produced for different audiences and with different marketing considerations in mind.

When Twickenham, another Quota company, and something of a sweat-shop, collapsed on 1 February 1937, there was a rash of bankruptcies.⁵ It was not the first company to go down but along with LFP and Capitol had been considered 'one of the romances of the Industry in this country'.⁶ Its Managing Director, Julius Hagen

distribution finance as well as ambition, but it was not a fixed percentage and may well have reflected LFP's financial situation.

1 Directed by her then husband, Monty Banks. Gracie Fields is said to have received, £40 000. Its cost might be compared with that for Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew too Much* (GB 1934), see Ivor Montagu Collection. Hitchcock's own salary was estimated at £3 583, a little over half of what Schach was to offer Walter Forde two years later. The cameramens' combined salaries worked out at £840, the editors' at the astounding low figure of £120. The final budget, drawn up on 4 Aug 1934 totalled, £48 074 12s. 8d;

2 Formby's fee allowed an estimated budget of a fraction under £40 000.

3 Dean Papers.

4 Dean Papers; It wasn't just on this one film that Stallich received a high wage. Erwin Hillier, on this film, was paid £15 per week, as camera operator. It had a nine week schedule, three weeks of which were location. The estimated budget was the low figure of £43 871 15s 7d. Looking at other estimated budgets in the Dean papers, this would have been significantly less than half the final figure.

5 It was, however not the first. 'A Receiver has been appointed for the City Film Corporation, Ltd., an organisation with a creditable record of production' noted *KW*, 30 April 1936.

6 *KW*, 30 Aug. 1934.

‘worked with us [on Quota-quickies] until we were dropping...no-one complained.’¹

Low admires the energy which he brought to Twickenham Films although like most of the companies of the period, it had been under-financed and had operated on borrowed money in much the same way as those which she criticises.

She passes over the criticisms of Hagen’s high living, and inconsequential films. American newspaper sources reported that his basic salary had gradually risen to \$700 (= £150) per week, in addition to which he personally took a commission of between 10 and 20 % of studio rentals, \$1,500 (= £320) for every film which the company produced and 25 % of the company’s net profit in addition to ‘travelling, entertaining and other expenses.’²As the studios were running twenty-four hours a day, at one point, it is not surprising that he was said to be earning a fortune.

Hagen behaved little differently from Korda, except he was less ambitious. ‘Julius Hagen...whose three companies were put in receivers’ hands last week, invited forty-four friends to luncheon at the May Fair Hotel yesterday “to explain.” [He] produced the costs and earnings of his last five films.’³ They turned out to have cost less than those of Dean, averaging just over £33 000, and all but one, the most expensive, had lost money. Bank loans and debentures had provided working capital. His loans from the Westminster Bank alone amounted to \$250 000 (=£53 000) in

1 Henry Kendall, *I Remember Romano’s*, London, 1960.

2 Unidentified American newspaper clipping, *NYP*.

3 *Daily Express*, 15 Jan. 1937, p. 5. His budgets appear to be lower than Korda’s, lower than ATP, closer to ABPC. He gave the figures for recent films as follows:

<i>The Private Secretary</i>	Cost: £30 000	Gross Income : £25 000
<i>The Last Journey</i>	£27 000	: £24 000
<i>A Fire Has Been Arranged</i>	£29 000	: £18 000
<i>In the Soup</i>	£32 000	: £20 500
<i>She Shall Have Music</i>	£48 000	: £60 000

Jack Hilton was apparently paid a salary of £7 000 and 22 1 2 % of the gross for *In the Soup*, an astronomical sum in comparison with what even top price artists like George Formby, were being paid. Hagen claimed to have been promised £48 000 for the American sales of *Scrooge* (1935), but had only received £1 200. Its total income was a mere £9 000. See unidentified clipping dated 17 Jan. 1937, BFI. This low return is unsurprising to anyone who has actually seen it. Other production costs, but not receipts are given in another unidentified BFI clipping: *Dusty Ermine*, £39 111; *Man in the Mirror*, £33 397; *Girl Without Morale*, £30 278; *Silver Blaze*; £30 777; *Vicar of Bray*, £20 398; *The Widow’s Island*, £16 306; only the first two were trade-shown.

August 1937, when the company went into receivership¹, with liabilities of £96 000.² The failure of Twickenham, then, was due 'in the opinion of the Receiver' to the lack of provision for proper capital to fund the programme, the excessive optimism of Hagen regarding the value of the productions, and the heavy salaries paid to the directors, especially to Hagen.³

Twickenham, the second studio in Britain to go over to sound, might be thought to have been in a good position to exploit its product, yet it had suffered the fate of virtually all the independent companies who could not assure the distribution and exhibition of their films. On the domestic market alone, even these inexpensive films, which were, for the most part, inferior on all counts, could not be certain of making money. In hard cash, its liabilities at the point it went into liquidation were comparable to those of Capitol Film Corporation. Its contribution to British cinema had been negligible.

The 'International' Film.

The idea of the 'international' film in Britain is frequently associated with Alexander Korda and his programme of film production whereby films made in Britain succeeded, especially in the American market, through a combination of international talent and a notional idea of scriptwriting with a base in the broad panorama of European history or historical fiction. The need to sell films on the world market had long been a major concern of ambitious film-makers and Korda himself, claimed to have given 'conscious thought to the problem of international films' as early as 1920

¹ *KW*, 4 March 1937; *KW*, 8 April 1937.

² Unidentified newspaper clipping, 7 Feb. 1937, BFI. Its assets of £35 396. 7s. 2d. were absorbed by debentures.

³ *KW*, 2 Sept. 1937. The over evaluation of stock led to £41 517 being charged to the profit and loss account and a 7 1/2 % dividend being paid out in each of the years 1931-4. Total liabilities exceeded half a million pounds. Hagen's assets were only £50. He admitted to gambling and claimed that a profit of £1 611 had actually gone into J. H. Productions. But he had also borrowed £500 from a money lender. See. *KW*, 15 Dec. 1938.

when his *Prince and the Pauper*, which was made in Vienna, became ‘the second European film to be seen outside Europe.... Ever since then I have thought in terms of international films and no other.’¹ During the silent period, with a change of inter-titles, films could easily be adapted for foreign audiences, but the advent of sound in 1928-9 transformed the film industry and simultaneously destroyed the concept of the national film as an international movie. Actors were, in general, tied to a foreign tongue, a factor which affected the German and British film industries, in particular.

The clearest and most celebrated British example of this is Anny Ondra’s performance in *Blackmail*, the 1929 film directed by Alfred Hitchcock, which was initiated as a silent film, but finally included sound sequences. Anny Ondra, whose voice had to be doubled by the English actress, Joan Barry, who stood off-camera and spoke into the microphone, did not again appear in a British film.²

The legacy of the introduction of sound to the cinema was a continuous struggle by the production companies to produce the genuinely ‘international film’. The term meant different things to different people and the approaches towards achieving it were also various. The British film industry responded by building studios and producing and co-producing a number of multi-lingual films, whereby films were shot ‘back to back’ in more than one language, sometimes but not always, with the same performers, and it brought European technicians to Britain.

The Multi-lingual and Bi-Lingual

The multi-lingual, which entailed pan-European production and distribution was first attempted in Britain almost immediately sound was introduced. In November

1 Interview with Stephen Watts, ‘Alexander Korda and the International Film’, *Cinema Quarterly*, Autumn, 1933, pp. 12-15. The first film European film to be seen outside Europe, according to Korda was Lubitsch’s *Madame du Barry*.

2 Anny Ondra (Anna Andrákova). was born Tarnów, Poland, 15 May, 1903 and starred in Czech, Austrian, German, and British films. Until 1933 she was married to the producer/writer Karel Lamac. After a scandalous divorce she married the ex-heavy-weight boxing champion of the world, Max Schmelling

1929, Associated Film Industries Ltd, was formed, under the management of Dr. Rudolph Becker, who had previously been the director of the foreign department at UFA.¹ ASFI intended to produce them by various exchanges of artistes (sic) and technicians through Tobis, its various subsidies and 'the foreign alliances' of the company'.²

Its production programme was a grand-plan of the German variety, but it was not completely thought through. Becker made two tri-lingual films at Wembley, *City of Song*³ (1931, dir. Carmine Gallone) and *The Bells* (1931, dir. Oscar Werndorff), both of which, long before the forced emigration of the mid-thirties, were entirely made by European artists, most of whom were to become exiles. They were intended to be both visually stunning and to sound magnificent. Top technicians were used but there were difficulties over both the sound and the script for *City of Song* which led to escalating costs.⁴ Three separate recording systems: de Forest, Tobis's own, and

1 ASFI was an ambitious, £1 000 000 company and one of the companies controlled by Isidore. Schlesinger. It owned 55 % of the equity and British Talking Pictures the remainder. The beginning of sound has brought many competing sound systems at various stages of development and commercial viability. BTP had acquired a licence to produce the de Forest patents, but development had been both slow and expensive. On the other hand, ASFI, in a much stronger financial position, owned the rights to over 700 Tobis-Klangfilm patents which were either competitive or compatible with those which had been acquired by BTP. By November, 1929, the latter was in financial difficulties and it was progressively taken over by ASFI, which sought to combine the best of both systems. Experimental research and experimentation continued through out the initial stages of the making of *City of Song*, but it was clear, in the end that the variable density system using a Westinghouse Kerr Cell, Klangfilm, was preferable to the ASFI engineers. All sound 'would be recorded by Klangfilm,' noted *KW*, 2 Jan. 1930.

2 These were the Schlesinger group, the Küchenmeister concern, Klangfilm and Tobis in Germany, and Tobis Sonore in France, see *KW*, 16 Jan. 1930. Schlesinger also 'presided over' British Talking Pictures, which, it transpired, had over-extended itself and went into liquidation in March 1930. ASFI had provided 'the necessary working capital for it to carry on trading'. See *KW*, 3 April 1930.

3 Produced by Arnold Pressburger.

4 The lighting camera-man on *City of Song* had been Arpad Viragh, but he died during the filming and was replaced by Curt Courant, who had filmed Lang's *Die Frau im Mond* (1929). Gunther Krampf, the photographer of Murnau's *Nosferatu* and Pabst's *Die Büchse der Pandora* was responsible for *The Bells*, his first film in England, which was described as 'second-rate' in *WFN*, Feb. 1937, but the photography of which he thought 'among the best work he has done'. Art direction was by Oscar Werndorff who had worked with Dupont and subsequently designed three of Hitchcock's British films.

Klangfilm had been tried before settling on the last.¹ Four weeks of shooting in Italy was totally scrapped as below par and production started afresh only after another series of exhaustive tests. Even after the first version had been rushed to completion a month after shooting had ended — it was revised, partially re-shot and re-edited to 'smooth and polish the construction', losing nearly...5 000 feet; the sound was substantially re-recorded as well as re-balanced to provide a more realistic relationship between voice and effects. Eventually, it was much admired as an 'exceptional British film'.²

For basically, the quality of *City of Song* is solely the result of the willingness of Dr. Becker to spend anything necessary to obtain quality.... At least five shooting scripts were prepared before one was finally agreed upon.... Any other company can do the same given...the patience and the willingness of the part of its executive to spend whatever time and money are necessary to achieve painstaking perfection. .it is much the cheapest in the end.³

It had, however, been a costly business and almost certainly not worth it. A few year's later, with the 'alien scare' developing, reviewers would have been less complimentary. The story of *City of Song*, had little to recommend it. Jan Kiepura is the hero of a script which has a striking similarity to one of the Tauber stories of four years later, *Heart's Desire*; he is brought to London because of his fine voice, but grows miserable in its society and returns to his sweetheart in Naples. The difference is only that Tauber returned to Vienna. Although similar themes were frequently to be found in the films with which émigré film-makers in Britain were later to be associated and, although some films expressed émigré preoccupations, such subjects were clearly not exclusively part of the milieu which surrounded the refugee from Germany.

¹ Klangfilm was formed in 1928 by AEG, Polyphone and Siemens and went into partnership with Tobis shortly afterwards.

² *MG*, n. d. Other reviews also describe it as a British film. Low, op. cit., p. 14 & pp. 183-4, writes about the two films in some detail and sees the experiment as an attempt to promote a rival to the RCA and Western Electric sound systems, .

³ *KW*, 22 Jan. 1931.

The second ASFI film, *The Bells* — an updated version of a well known melodrama, *Le Juif Polonais*, by Erckmann-Chatrian¹ — also anticipates some of the scenario ideas which were to cause so much irritation to British writers a few years later and which Schach and his colleagues were to utilise. It tells of a Burgomaster, tortured by his conscience at the sound of bells, who finally confesses to the killing of a Jew and commits suicide on his daughter's wedding day; it remains academically interesting, but was a complete failure, and in June 1931 Becker resigned.²

Other companies were also involved. Most of the films with which Gaumont-British were associated were to be made at UFA's Neubabelsberg studios, under the direction of Erich Pommer and with the advantage of German technicians. 'It...is not intended to make just British pictures in Germany...the idea is to make English-speaking versions of [German] pictures, particularly in view of the fact that *Congress Dances* has proved...that the public wants them.'³ Sir John Heygate describes the experience of making a tri-lingual in Berlin; it was like being back at school where the British or the French may be better or worse than the French on any particular day, but 'the Germans remained permanently top of the form.'⁴ The French and British supervisors would watch the German director going through his paces and 'try and discover what was going on.' They would 'more or less' relate their own scenario book to the scene they were watching and explain it to their own actors, who would be expected to take their turn in front of the camera without direction; they had, it was argued, had all all morning to observe the German team in action and prepare themselves.

1 Emile Erckmann and Alexandre Chatrian, French authors who wrote under a joint pen-name.

2 KW, 18 June 1931. Becker left England for Amsterdam, 'to control one of the largest sound film organisations in the world,' as managing director of Kuchenmeister Maatschapij fur Spræhend Film, the organisation controlling Tobis Klangfilm, Tobis Films Sonores of Paris and Tobis of America, which ASFI controlled....' He retained his directorships of ASFI and British Publicity Sound Films and remained a film producer in Britain, registering Rudolph Becker and Co. Ltd., a £5 000 company, in May 1936.

3 KW, 5 May 1932. Over twenty performers were quickly off to Berlin.

4 Sir John Heygate, *Talking Pictures*, London, 1934, pp. 42-45.

It quickly revealed itself as an unsatisfactory method of producing films for foreign markets, and could be prohibitively expensive. In addition, Pommer drew 'almost exclusively from European sources for his material — mainly German — and the stories he chose were all too often largely incapable of proper translation' into English.¹

All the directors of multi-linguals eventually sought careers in Hollywood where difficulties with language did not inhibit their careers and where they were able to pursue a different kind of international film-making. Richard Eichberg and Kurt Bernhardt, for example, had had careers which had followed similar paths and been involved in bi-linguals from the beginning of sound. Eichberg had directed English and German language versions of *Der Greifer* (1930), for which Rudolph Katscher² and Egon Eis had provided the original scenario,³ and followed it with *Let's Love and Laugh* (BIP-Richard Eichberg Productions, 1931) at Elstree. The playwright, the young Rodney Ackland, was starting his film career 'as liaison between [Eichberg] and the script-writing department'.⁴ It was another script typically unsuited for a bilingual, one that might have been specifically designed to make a foreigner look foolish and Eichberg 'able and stolid' as he was, 'did the best he could with it.' Yet, he couldn't come to terms with the humour for the English version. 'Is das a *yope* ?', he asked after struggling with a typically grim piece of seaside humour. Ackland's description of this episode is, perhaps, understandable from a playwright who saw himself as a custodian of the English language, but it also conveys the chauvinism of the period which was characterised by benign amusement as the non-English

1 Low, op cit, p. 91-4. According to Basil Wright, *Film & TV Technician*, Oct. 1982, 'sound also signalled a period of frustration for French directors who were all given the job of making multilingual versions of American films' and Cavalcanti, who was to become one of the great benefactors to British cinema 'was glad to accept John Grierson's invitation to come over to England and work with him at the GPO Film Unit.'

2 Rudolph Cartier after 1942.

3 The English version was called *Night Birds*. Miles Malleon wrote the screenplay.

4 Rodney Ackland and Elspeth Grant, *The Celluloid Mistress*, London, 1954, pp. 30-31.

struggled with the language. Eichberg, the actor and director who discovered Lilian Harvey, is reduced to a comic character in a scenario.¹ Nevertheless, he directed four bi-linguals in Britain, and by 1938, he was in the United States, staging operetta on Broadway before moving on to Hollywood, where his clumsy English was not seen as a handicap.

Kurt Bernhardt, too, had had a long career by the time he reached Britain. His training had been for the stage and he had toured throughout Germany, before turning to directing. In 1926, he had co-written his first film with Carl Zuckmayer,² but his reputation as the director was only finally established when sound came in, with the first all-talking German film, *Die Letzte Kompanie*, in 1931 and *Der Tunnel* (UFA 1933). There were to be two more versions of *Der Tunnel*, one in French, which Bernhardt, himself directed and a simplified British version which was made some four years later by Maurice Elvey.³

Bernhardt had been one of the earliest directors to be arrested and intimidated by the Nazis, and was in Britain by 1934. He had made one film in Paris, *en route*, and continued for the next few years to dart backwards and forwards to the Continent. In England, he was soon acting as production manager on the first of his two films for Toeplitz, *The Dictator*, budgeted at between £60,000 and £70, 000⁴, before proceeding to direct French and English versions of William Locke's novel, *The Beloved Vagabond* in 1936, with Maurice Chevalier. Toeplitz intended to make two films a

1 Richard Eichberg (1888-1953), had acted in over a hundred silent films and produced virtually all the films he had directed in Germany.

2 *Qualen der Nacht*.

3 Elvey had previously directed another futuristic film in 1929, *High Treason*, (Gaumont-British, 1929) in which a tunnel under the English Channel is flooded and on which Andrew Mazzei had been the designer. For *The Tunnel*, Kurt Siodmak wrote the scenario and three other ex-German filmmaker were involved at a senior level, the designer Ernó Metzner, the costume designer Joe Strassner, and the photographer Günther Krampf. Miniatures were by Filippo Guidobaldi. The screenplay was written by L. du Garde Peach, with dialogue by Clemence Dane. In spite of casting Richard Dix in the lead and supplementing him with a host of English and American actors, it remained a ridiculous subject, one of a set of preposterous visionary German ideas which begin with *Metropolis*, includes *FPI Antwortet Nicht* and culminates with Cameron Menzies's *Things to Come* (LFP, 1936)

4 *KW*, 12 June 1934. It was made at Dean's Studios at Ealing. Hans Wilhelm wrote the scenario.

year, but made just these two¹ and by 1936 his company was out of business. In addition to their producer and Bernhardt himself the crews were mostly European: Franz Planer², Andrejew, Joe Strassner and Darius Milhaud or Karol Rathaus³, making noticeable contributions.⁴

Just at the point when the curious hybrid of multi-lingual and bi-lingual films were falling out of favour as an economic proposition, especially as the German market in Nazi hands had become increasingly marginal, Bernhardt established his own company with Eugene Tuscherer to make them. British Unity Pictures, was set up in October 1936 with a nominal capital of £10 000. Together they produced its first film *The Girl in the Taxi* (1937), which was directed by André Berthomieu from a scenario written by Fritz Gottfurcht who, like Bernhardt and Eichberg, already had two careers behind him.⁵

An English ex-diplomat Robert Garrett involved himself in two bi-lingual companies, one with the Hungarian Eugene Tuscherer and the other with the Czechoslovakian stage producer and publisher Otto Klement. The programme of Garrett and Klement was to produce 'just by way of a start' six films which cost the

1 Toeplitz Productions, Ltd., registered 4 June 1934, with £100 000 capital. Directors included Sir Harry Cassie Holden, Bart. (Chairman), a director of the Midland Bank, Giuseppe Toeplitz and Lud vico Toeplitz.

2 Planer, once a portrait photographer, was one of Pommer's discoveries. He was in Hollywood by 1937.

3 Rathaus, a concert composer, came to Britain in 1934. His score for *Die Mörder Dimitri Karamazov* (1931) was described by Kurt London, *Film Music*, London, 1936, pp. 224-5, as 'a model of film-symphonic art....' He liked to work on a film from the beginning so that the music was not incidental or additional, but part of the film's structure.

4 The English version of *The Beloved Vagabond* was edited by Dug Myers, the French version and *The Dictator*, by Paul Weatherbauer [Paul Weatherwax]. These were the films referred to in *KW*, 9 April 1936, as being funded by mystery financiers.

5 As Fred Gottfurcht, he was to become head of the script department of ABPC after the war. At this time, he had worked on only one film, in Paris, (Hermann Kosterlitz had engaged him as scenario writer for *Le Train pour Venise*) and was still struggling with the English language; yet he remained a good choice to adapt this operetta by Georg Okonowsky, for he had been editor of the small but prestigious literary journal, *Der Feuerreiter*, and owner and writer of the topical cabaret Larafari in Berlin, in which the singer-comédienne Rosa Valetti had been the star attraction. Allan Gray, who started his film career in Berlin, had been its resident composer. *PPB*, 6 Aug. 1951, gives some details of his career.

proverbial '£60 000.each'.¹ Its first film, *A Woman Alone*, was to be directed by the Moscow-born Fedor Ozep who had worked in both the Soviet Union and Germany. Amongst a chain of films which he had directed in Germany was the celebrated, *Der Mörder Dimitri Karamasoff* (1931), which starred his then wife Anna Sten.² In the end, however, Ozep only provided the story for *A Woman Alone*, as Sten subsequently married Eugene Frenke, and Frenke became the director of their only British film.³ Garrett's company with Tuscherer, Victoria Films, utilised the ex-UFA producer Alfred Zeisler to direct *The Amazing Quest of Ernest Bliss* (1936), a story of a rich wastrel (Cary Grant) who comes close to death from boredom and decides to live from his own earnings. The Capra like story has him taking up a variety of humble jobs: a gas-oven salesman, a vegetable shop porter and a chauffeur, whilst displaying astounding generosity to all who have helped him along the way, but it failed to be more than a trivial exercise in trying to capture studio London.

The bi-lingual and the multi-lingual then were not to provide the genuinely 'international film'. They fell between two stools. Even the remake, the reworking of a previously European idea, proved a failure. Films like Maurice Elvey's version of *The Tunnel* (GB, 1935) and Milton Rosmer's *Emil and the Detectives* (Wainwright, 1935), may have had their production costs reduced by utilising earlier material, but they stubbornly remained transplanted and expensive Continental fantasies.

The International Film and the German Artist in Britain

An alternative to this generally unsatisfactory method of filming was to bring the key film-makers to Britain. In the late 1920s and the early 1930s, the intention was to

1 *Picturegoer*, 17 Aug. 1935.

2 Ozep left Germany in 1933 and worked in France. Interned at the outbreak of war, he was freed in 1940 and made his way to Canada and the USA, via Morocco. He died in 1949.

3 Sten, began her acting career in Soviet cinema and was first married to the director Grigori Alexandrov. After *Karamasoff*, Sam Goldwyn, believing that he had discovered a second Garbo took her to Hollywood, where she became known as 'Goldwyn's Folly.'

produce feature films utilising their talent, films which were acceptable in Germany. As the 1930s developed they were used in the drive for the North American market.

Gaumont-British was at the centre. Mutz Greenbaum came in 1931, as chief photographer to Gaumont-British at Lime Grove Studios; he had worked in Germany since 1914 and rapidly established himself as one of the handful of expert cine-photographers in Britain. When *Kine* described the main sound studio at Gainsborough Islington, it noted cradles slung from roof rails and running on ball bearing rollers which could be used as galleries for lighting units. 'These units are mostly 2, 3m and 5 kilowatt incandescent lamps in the usual swivelling reflector housing. No ten kilowatt lamps are used...and only a little arc lighting for outlining purposes, the camera man (sic) being Mutz Greenbaum.'¹ Greenbaum who never lost his enthusiasm for working as a lighting cameraman preferred 'on the whole...to work inside the studio' where he could use 'his creative faculty to the full' and where he achieved his 'glistening effects by the use of a little arc, which gave a hard light and softened it with a little gauze on the incandescent lights'².

Alfred Junge came too, he had been a scenic artist at the Berlin *Staatsoper* and the *Staattheater* was, perhaps, the most important of all art directors in Britain during the 1930s and 1940s. He had first worked in England in 1928, for British International on Dupont's *Moulin Rouge* and *Piccadilly*. After a short period in Paris and Berlin, he returned to London in 1932 under contract to Gaumont-British and remained in Britain until after the war. Junge, Michael Powell observed, 'was head director at Balcon's Lime Grove..... he ran it like a machine.'³ 'It was the first time in England that they had a supervising art director. Junge was a good organiser, a tremendous

¹ *KW*, 11 Jan. 1934, p.105.

² Interview, *FW*, 24 Nov. 1933; Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April 1987. Greenbaum was actually born in New York and taken to Germany as a young child. He photographed his first film for Max Mack, *Der Fackel im Frack*, in 1916.

³ Michael Powell, interview with author, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op cit.

disciplinarian, and a very good trainer of young people...besides being a very great designer himself'¹.

British producers had grudgingly survived in the European market prior to Hitler and, as we have seen, they used a variety of strategies to reduce the costs of production and to exploit European talent. Events within and without the film industry were gradually to reduce their flexibility. Sound was one factor, Nazi anti-Semitism another. The evening before Heinrich Fraenkel left Berlin he had been present when a group of storm-troopers stopped the screening of Korda's *The Rise of Catherine the Great* by shouting anti-Semitic abuse.² Taken together, it meant that the whole German language market was progressively closed to British films.

The options for the British producer were limited. Like ABPC, he could target films solely at the British domestic market where a small profit was possible provided the budget did not exceed £30 000, although, as we have seen, even cheap cut-throat companies like Basil Dean's ATP were unable to work within this framework, and Twickenham's films could still lose money. The alternative path was to explore the American markets with larger budgets and the advantage of a 'common language'.

This was the route which Korda, who had previously worked in Hollywood, and most of the ambitious producers, took.³ Although, for the most part, Korda converted continental story ideas for English-language audiences, he faced the fact that the German market was entirely lost to British films for as long as Hitler remained in

1 Michael Powell, interview with author, August 30, 1973, in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, Brussels 1973. This view of Junge is confirmed by the photographer Christopher Challis; interview with Rex Stapleton, 7 Jan. 1984, in: Rex Stapleton, 'A Matter of Powell and Pressburger', London, 1984, p.17.

2 Heinrich Fraenkel, *Farewell to Germany*, London, 1959, p. 22. The newspapers the following day described it as a 'spontaneous outbreak of popular wrath' against Bergner. She and Czinner were invited to Britain by Korda in 1932 to make an Anglo-German co-production, but by 1933 her films were not wanted by the Nazis. Fraenkel, who had been a publicist and Ivor Montagu's agent in the Germany at one point, looked for a job in England, see letter from Victor Gollanz to Montagu, 19 Dec. 1928, Ivor Montagu Collection, but bitterly described himself 'expatriated by the Nazis' in his AIM Number 3504, n.d. ACCT.

3 Victor Saville, Herbert Wilcox, the Ostrers, and Schach for example.

power. For Korda the 'international film' was to be a Hollywood film made at Denham by a combination of American and European talent.

The differing approaches of the more ambitious producers can be seen by comparing some of their products. Gaumont-British burrowed its way to America with its version of *The Tunnel*; Korda was more explicit and took Britain across the Atlantic, stone by stone, in *The Ghost Goes West*. With its broad characterisation of Americans it was a conscious attempt to bridge the cultures. Victor Saville, with *Goodbye Mr. Chips* and *The Citadel* looked for stylistic synthesis and employed Hollywood directors. One producer, Max Schach, was significantly different.

Schach's imagination remained in Vienna. His notion of the 'international film' was of a film exported from Central Europe. His *Spy of Napoleon*, although it includes the fading American star Richard Barthelmess, remains an entirely European fantasy. The films which Schach produced in Britain are best seen as a continuation of a tradition to which he was emotionally attached and a variation on the bi-lingual. His artists and technicians, his writers and his film subjects were almost entirely from Europe, nearly always from Austria, and frequently from Vienna itself. He was never tempted to broaden his view of cinema to include subjects which might appeal to North American audiences. Like Korda, Schach looked to the larger budget; the musical films with which he is associated have all the characteristics of the bi-lingual, they were German films made in Britain. More significantly, he seemed to think that distribution in the United States would take care of itself. He did not grasp, or more likely he chose to ignore, that having a distribution arrangement with UA, as he had for Trafalgar Film Productions, did not guarantee exhibition unless the distributor itself had money tied up in the production.

Korda and Schach's approach to production contrasted with the parochialism of small budget film-making; a film distributed by an American major in the United States suggested the possibility of larger budgets and greater profits. The effect of the Films Act of 1928 was that American producers were encouraged to make films in Britain in order for their films to qualify for the Quota Act. It was an opportunity for

Korda and Schach certainly, but it was also an opportunity for others. As we shall see, documentation held at the Commercial Union confirms that insurance companies saw the Quota Act as providing investment openings, but first we must look at what is known about Korda and Schach.

‘British Films for World Suitability’: Korda and Schach

‘I suppose you’ve just been hearing about Flexicolour?’ he asked, with a faint smile and, without waiting for a reply continued: ‘We’ll take my advice and don’t touch it. Everyone in the business knows it’s just a racket. If you want something good, put your shirt on Infracolour. They went to sixteen bob the day after Bott announced he would use it for a picture. We’ll all in it up to our eyebrows.’

Jeffrey Dell, *Nobody Ordered Wolves*, London, 1939.

That diminutive but dynamic film magnate, Max Schach looks as though he may rival Alexander Korda in making British films which will interest world audiences. Unidentified American newspaper clipping, 11 April 1937, NYP.

Alexander Korda and Max Schach were both born in Hungary. Both were émigrés with unsuccessful careers behind them. Korda had been nudged out of Hollywood, Schach had been driven from Emelka Studios in Munich. In Britain, Korda was to achieve some success, Schach, whom David Stewart Hull generously describes as one of ‘Germany’s three top pre-Nazi producers’, along with Erich Pommer and Seymour Nebenzal, none at all.¹ Almost all sources on Korda describe his complex nature. He was richly human; he ‘was as generous as a prince’, but he ‘could be maddening too...he had a great number of sides to his nature.’² Schach was enthusiastically welcomed as an inspired figure by the trade press, which saw him as ‘safely established as one of our busiest and most prolific producers...[who has]...produced more films in the last 18 months than any other individual producer in this country.’³

¹ David Stewart Hull, *Film in the Third Reich*, Berkeley, London, 1969, p. 128.

² Ralph Richardson, ‘Sir Alexander Korda’, *S&S*, Spring, 1956, p. 215. Two other tributes in the same issue, from Graham Greene and Sidney Gilliat, are in a similar vein. Greene writes ‘He has no successor, no one with whom it is possible not to talk about films,’ loc. cit. Korda kept Richardson on half salary throughout the war and later refused the offer to repay him, see Garry O’Connor, *Ralph Richardson: an actor’s life*, London, 1982, p. 106.

³ *KW*, 24 June 1937. It was probably accepting him at the estimation of his own publicity department.

There is another side to both. If everyone sought Korda out, according to Hans Feld, editor of *World Film News*, reputable figures like Erich Pommer kept well away from Schach.¹ The 'little Napoleon of the cinema,' as Paul Holt called him,² was likened by the journalist Hilde Marchant to 'a perky griffin behind an enormous desk,'³ and is said by Karol Kulik to have been 'the most universally disliked producer ever to work in British Films'.⁴

Rachael Low goes further in the unfavourable comparison. In her book on film-making in Britain during the 1930s, she writes that the brief participation of Max Schach in the British Film Industry 'was to have unfortunate consequences.'

He and his associates borrowed a very large amount of short-term capital to finance production on a film-by-film basis from financial institutions in the City of London money market. These institutions, with no security and no control, did not wait to see if that money would be repaid but proceeded to make more available to a whole series of other new companies. The glamorous, extravagant and much publicised activities of these companies made it appear that there was a boom in British production, although their films were actually few in number compared with the quota films.⁵

The 'tramp' producers, as she calls them, 'none of whom had their own studios,' were unable to repay their loans and when the City withdrew its financial support. Schach, 'a dapper little Central European...who since 1920 had been a journalist, a film critic, a screenwriter and an independent producer in Austria and Germany' she paints as the villain of the boom. After the collapse of his companies, he 'quietly disappeared from the British film industry.' Schach, she feels, contributed nothing; money went directly into people's pockets. Korda created stars, built Denham,

1 Hans Feld, interview with author, 12 July 1986. Feld had previously written extensively about Schach in *FK*. Feld, once editor of *FK*, fled from Berlin to Prague in March 1933 where he published a cultural monthly, *Die Kritik* and arrived in England in 1935, where he became editor of Grierson's paper. Harry Watt and Grierson sponsored his residency. With Philip Lindsay and Max Mack, he set up Ocean Films Ltd. to remake Griffith's *Orphans of the Storm*, but ran out of money.

2 *Daily Express*, 21 Nov. 1940.

3 Alan Wood *Mr. Rank*, London, 1952, pp. 93-94.

4 Karol Kulik, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1975, p. 146.

5 Low, op. cit., p. 198 ff. This is essentially the view which Basil Wright expressed to Karol Kulik in 1973, see Kulik, op. cit., p. 173.

provided opportunities for writers and directors, and encouraged the industry to find a significant place for itself in the world market. There is some truth in this, but it is an incomplete picture and it is not so simple.

Korda and the Simple Art of Accounting

Alexander Korda is the stuff of fiction and there is no end to the Korda stories; he and his brothers, along with the composer, Mischa Spoliansky, appear as thinly disguised characters in Jeffrey Dell's novel *Nobody Ordered Wolves* (1939). Dell, who had been employed by Korda as a writer on films, including *Sanders of the River* (1935, dir. Zoltan Korda) paints him as an extravagant, seductive opportunist, devoid of the malice and megalomania of his Hollywood counterparts, but taking advantage of rather incompetent financiers and accountants.¹

His office [Herbert Dreuther's] in Graham Greene's short novel *Loser Take All*.

was not like an office at all — there was a bookcase containing sets of English classics and it showed Dreuther's astuteness that Trollope was there and not Dickens, Stevenson and not Scott, thus giving the appearance of personal taste. There was an unimportant Renoir and a lovely little Boudin on the far wall, and one noticed at once that there was a sofa but not a desk. The few visible files were stacked on a Regency table...²

For Greene, 'There never was a man who bore less malice...the only film producer...with whom I could spend days and nights of conversation without so much as mentioning the cinema.'³ He had 'more sense of humour than sense of

1 See also Eric Siepmann, *Waterloo in Wardour Street*, London, 1936. Siepmann's experiences at London Films became the 'inspiration' for this rather poor novel which sold only five hundred copies.

2 *Loser Takes All*, Penguin edition, Harmondsworth, 1983, p. 18. The business tycoon, Dreuther, 'is undeniably Alexander Korda...soaked in memories of Alex, a man whom I loved;' see Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape*, Penguin edition, London, 1981, pp. 167-170; Graham Greene, *The Pleasure Dome*, ed. John Russell Taylor, London, 1972, pp. 2-3. Writers, who have pointed to Greene's critical film reviews of Korda's films, have not noted the ease with which Greene was converted to him. Greene was to write two successful films for him after the war, *The Third Man* and *The Fallen Idol*.

3 Greene, *Ways of Escape*, op. cit., p. 50-51. Korda refused permission for Alec Guinness to play Dreuther, who is prone to let people down, for the film of *Loser*. The part was taken by 'Robert

power', wrote R.C Sherriff. He spoke English 'softly and immaculately....He was the only film producer I met who didn't confine his conversation to films...it seemed as if the last thing he wanted to talk about was the cinema....'¹ If Leslie Howard could be 'scornful and sceptical about Korda's omniscience [and] found working with him a somewhat mixed pleasure,' he was frequently intrigued and impressed by his mind²

With Eric Siepmann, Korda 'discussed politics,' in offices 'where old Etonian ties were regarded as an asset,'³ but his Hungarian snobbery, led him to admire 'the wrong kind of Englishman.'⁴ His only instruction to his new employee was 'You had better take charge of the Wells film [*Things to Come*]', for he preferred to wax philosophical that Socialists were not needed in England, because the 'Conservatives will make all your reforms for you.'⁵

Siepmann saw Korda as deliberately seeking influence and Paul Tabori recalls that at 'one time [Korda] was employing the sons of three past or future British Prime Ministers – Oliver Stanley (later Lord Baldwin), Anthony Asquith and Randolph Churchill.'⁶ He 'could charm the hind legs off a donkey';⁷ when an angry Lothar

Morley, playing Robert Morley,' *ibid.* p. 168. Greene believes that Korda recognised himself as Dreuther

1 R C Sherriff, *No Leading Lady*, London, 1968, p. 285 ff. Korda paid Sherriff £6 000 for the screenplay of *The Four Feathers*.

2 Leslie Ruth Howard, *A Quite Remarkable Father*, London, 1939, p. 176.

3 Eric Otto Siepmann, *Confessions of a Nihilist*, London, 1935, pp. 132-3. See also Enid Bagnold, *Autobiography* (from 1889), London, 1969, p. 87, for another observation on his 'curious claim to sophistication.'

4 Siepmann, *op. cit.*

5 *Ibid*

6 Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1959, p. 134. He was far from alone in this. Wilcox, for example, employed Lord Tyrrell (later Sir William Tyrrell). He was writer for both *Victoria the Great* and *60 Glorious Years* and became head of BBFC in 1936. Up to that point he had been Permanent Head of the Foreign Office, a pioneer of cultural propaganda and of news as a new addition to the conduct of diplomacy, and had various roles, including Head of Political Intelligence and Chairman of the British Council.

7 Rex Harrison, *Rex*, London, 1976, p. 63.

Mendes threatened to sue for his salary, he finished up feeling ashamed of himself.¹

Korda's nephew Michael Korda lauds him as a brilliant exploiter of the 'simple matter of accounting', which he had learnt in Hollywood, whereby unrealized and unreleasable films, unusable literary properties, and uncompleted works, became financial 'assets' on the balance sheet. 'Thus...the larger the disasters, the rosier the prospects of the company would seem.' City investors and the British Government, according to Michael Korda, 'were still struggling to understand it over twenty years later...He had contrived to make an asset of his natural extravagance.'² Basil Dean's patronising description of Korda as 'highly intelligent, unscrupulous, with a genuine love of art and a clear idea of its commercial value...belonging to a race of alien buccaneers able to charm the financial bird off its British nest for the express purpose of removing one if not all of its eggs' is the kind of sour, double-edged compliment Dean saved for personalities of whom he was jealous.³

Sarah Street, in a devastating foray has documented many examples of Korda's financial impudence.⁴ He would borrow from the Prudential and blatantly spend the same amount at Cartier, on a gift for Merle Oberon (whom he married in 1939) and he would squander money on his productions. Korda would operate with a sweeping disregard for the realities of personal finance; he would lose 'other people's money, to be sure, but money all the same'.⁵ The financier Edward Beddington-Behrens relates a similar, but little-known anecdote, about Korda. In 1937, newspapers were full of the story that Korda had purchased UA when Korda telephoned Beddington-Behrens

1 Tabori, op. cit. p. 167. Mendes did eventually receive it.

2 Michael Korda, *Charmed Lives*, London, 1979, p. 105.

3 Dean, Basil, *Mind's Eye*, London 1973, p. 249. On p. 134, Dean uses similar phrasing in describing Archie Pitt, the manager, and for a short while, husband of Gracie Fields; 'Archie Pitt was a sad, cautious little man with a commonplace mind and a shrewd idea of the commercial value of the wife he had acquired'.

4 Sarah Street, 'Alexander Korda', in *HJF*, Vol. 6 No.2, (1986), pp. 161-179. LFP was widely considered to be mismanaged. See Caroline Moorehead, *Sidney Bernstein*, London, 1984, p. 143.

5 Michael Korda, op cit., p. 75-8. Michael Korda provides many examples of Korda's apparent indifference to money.

from New York ‘at a time when calls cost £20 a minute, to say, “You’ve probably read in the papers that I have bought United Artists. I’ve fixed everything except the money. Can you help?” ‘ Beddington-Behrens listened to Korda explaining that, in addition to \$5 000 000 (£1 000 000) for the business an extra £1,million was ‘*absolutely necessary* ‘ [my italics] to prevent the production units going ‘bust’. Profits, however, were so low that Beddington-Behrens felt unable to justify an issue for the extra working capital. Korda’s ‘comment was: “ Well let’s not bother about the working capital. Let’s buy the business anyhow and hope for the best.”’¹

Although Korda is known to have wasted money and a few found him unkind,² he retained fierce loyalties and could repay a debt; according to Joseph von Sternberg, Korda flattered and courted him into directing *I Claudius*, for, in 1931, he had been ‘the only one to see him off as the train pulled out’ in his unceremonious departure from Hollywood.³ When, in 1933, Herbert Wilcox had a sole distribution contract with UA, Korda was unable to ‘get airborne — financially or otherwise.... He had raised £58 000 and the distributors interested were United Artists. Would I lift my ban for this one film.... I gave my consent.... It was *The Private Life of Henry VIII*....’⁴ When he became the owner of Denham Studios, Korda extended credit of £50 000 for Wilcox to make *Victoria the Great*, one-third of the budgeted cost of the film, and a successful financial gamble which seems to have been made with virtually no

1 Edward Beddington-Behrens, *Look Back Look Forward*, London 1963, p. 85. Korda and G Idwyn took an option to purchase United Artists for \$2 000 000 each in May 1937. They had ‘until December 21 to come up with the money’; see Tino Balio, *United Artists*, London, 1976, p. 144.

2 See Ackland and Grant, op cit., p. 174. Also Kulik, op. cit., pp. 300-301. Dean, also, had some grounds for feeling resentment towards Korda. After the war, in 1949, and along with Hugh Quennell, who was Korda’s financial adviser, they had both been involved in Group Theatres Ltd. Dean found himself accepting personal liability for its, having believed that he was acting in accord with their wishes, see Dean, op. cit., p. 295-303., p. 295-303.

3 Joseph von Sternberg, *Fun in a Chinese Laundry*, London, 1965, pp. 170-177. Sternberg claims that Korda also offered him a full partnership in all his enterprises. There is sometimes the suggestion that Korda employed him to settle Marlene Dietrich’s fee for *Knight Without Armour*. Korda was similarly loyal to his first wife, Maria Corda, creating a trust fund for her and making arrangements for her in his will, 30 Nov. 1955.

4 Herbert Wilcox, *Twenty-five Thousand Sunsets*, London, 1967, p. 113. Street, loc. cit., observes that United Artists may have put pressure on Wilcox.

money at all.¹ Korda's generosity is legend. He gave John Myers, his publicity director on *Henry VIII* a solid platinum watch;² he supported many refugees who were experiencing hard times.

Korda himself had borrowed heavily from the beginning of his British career and had charged, under-funded, into his first major gamble in Britain. *Henry VIII*, had been rescued by the 'the portly person of Signor Ludovico Toeplitz de Grand Ry, son of an Italian banker,' who 'provided the necessary money so that *Henry* could be completed.'³ It had paid off because of United Artists' distribution in the US. Thus he was later able to lose money on films whilst retaining his reputation as an 'outstanding...world famous producer'. C.A. Lejeune cynically observed, in 1936, that all this money 'for a man with Korda's abilities, a man who had just put H.G.Wells under contract and was negotiating with Winston Churchill, was chicken feed.'⁴ His subsequent borrowing grew when the Australian businessman, Montagu Marks, tried to interest him in the Hillman Colourgravure, which had been developed by Gerrard Industries, a company in which the Prudential Assurance Co. had an interest.⁵

Claude Dansey, MI6 and Funding for Films

For all his lack of financial caution, Korda was a visionary. His grasp of the way in which American distribution needed to be harnessed was unrivalled in the British

1 Ibid , p 158 Immediately filming began, 'a shortage of money began to make itself evident 'Anna Neagle had never worked in a picture which was made under such a feeling of tension; 'many of the staff had gone on half pay'; she, herself, drew none at all. Wilcox sought private capital and she raked together all her 'ready cash' for the common pool. See Anna Neagle, *It's Been Fun*, London, 1949, pp. 49 50.

2 Tabori, op. cit. p. 134. There are many other stories of this kind, which also illustrate his thoughtfulness.

3 Tabori, op. cit. p. 129; 'With his Falstaffian figure and beard it was unavoidable that he should be nicknamed "Henry IX"'.

4 C. A. Lejeune, 'The Private Life of London Films', *Nash's Pall Mall Gazette*, December, 1936. Korda paid Churchill £10 000 for the rights to Marlborough, a project abandoned in 1935.

5 Lejeune, loc. cit.; Street, loc. cit., pp. 164.

film industry. Similarly, he fully appreciated the direction in which colour would have to develop in the cinema and that the numerous gimcrack British systems which were in various stages of development had no future. His interest in the Hillman process needs to be seen in this light. It has been misunderstood as one of Korda's mistakes, a process which he thought could be developed, but failed. Yet, self-evidently, it had no commercial viability, at the point he acquired it. It 'is under the control of a joint subsidiary, Colourgravure, and is to be handled by my company...'.¹ Thereafter, he showed no interest in it, but it served as part of a fabric of opportunities which was to provide him with a more secure financial base and link him more closely to the Prudential. It has 'obvious advantages over subtractive systems as regards cost' observed R. H. Cricks, a fortnight later, but it suffers 'from the disadvantage of needing a projector conversion.'² This was to underestimate the problems, as the Hillman camera too had had even more intractable difficulties, which made it completely unviable as a commercial proposition. As Major Adrian Cornwell-Clyne wrote

It was announced that pictures would be filmed by Mr. Korda, but no pictures were ever released, and this may have been due to the fact that a camera made according to the Hillman patents would have little chance of avoiding serious defects of time parallax, and to a lesser extent of space parallax. Nor, at the time, was any announcement made as to the proposed method of presenting films taken with the camera. Were they to be projected by some additive device? Or were they to be printed by one or other of the available two-colour processes? But now that London Film Productions have adopted Technicolor (subscribing some £50 000 to

¹ *KW*, 11 Oct. 1934. He continued 'There is a considerable amount of experimental work to be done in colour...and for this reason we are developing a school of cameramen.' In late 1934 LFP was formed as a public company and its capital increased from £141,000 to £325,000. This turned out to be a three cornered deal between LFP, Gerrard Industries and Colourgravure, which involved the transfer of 100,000 shares of Colourgravure Ltd. to LFP in return for £100 000 6 % Cumulative Convertible Income Debentures. And there were options; see *KW*, 1 Nov. 1934; *KW*, 6 Dec. 1934. Korda fully understood that Technicolor was the process which would dominate the market for Dr. Kalmus had a clear sense of what was necessary for a successful colour process. Kalmus, *KW*, 12 Dec. 1929, had come to Britain and laid out the principles of a sound colour system. One of them was that there must be no projector lens attachment.

² *KW*, 25 Oct. 1934. R.H. Cricks, *KW*'s colour consultant and a shrewd observer of developments in colour, went on to describe the system, whereby 'by means of an optical attachment in the projector, the three-colour images are projected in superimposition upon the screen.'

Technicolor Limited) it is, alas! unlikely that the Hillman camera will now be used.¹

Korda, like the Napoleon Bott of Jeffrey Dell's novel, quite obviously, had no commitment to an unviable colour process. H. Cornwell-Clyne details particulars of both the Hillman colour camera and projection requirements. A rudimentary understanding of the complicated camera process shows it as impractical. A three colour oscillating filter was situated behind the camera's two lenses and the film frame was exposed twice, through the same colour filters. 'Time-parallax fringing' was thus 'inevitable.' Korda, who was already well aware of developments towards a three colour process by Technicolor can hardly have been unaware of this weakness. In acquiring the system, he was again grasping an opportunity to enlarge his financial base and make himself more attractive to the Prudential, which had become LFP's financial backer, whilst simultaneously putting himself in a better long term position to strike a deal with Technicolor a few months later.²

By October 1934, LFP's capital had risen to £825 000. Sir Connop Guthrie, Chairman of the Prudential had become a member of the board and Montagu Marks, who, according to Tabori, had also taken the option on Denham, had become its general manager.³ Support had been agreed for the building of a studio with colour facilities. In these circumstances, a half-baked and undeveloped colour system like the Hillman process would have carried no weight in Korda's thinking, except, like some of the 'properties' he would purchase, as a lever for additional finance. As Karol Kulik puts it, with 'the Prudential and United Artists as the two pillars of his empire,

1 Adrian Bernard Klein, *Colour Cinematography*, London, 1936, p. 130-131. Klein, (later Cornwell Clyne) was head of the Gaspar Color Laboratory in London.

2 Low, op. cit., p.105, believes that it was the appearance of *Becky Sharp* which decided Korda against the Hillman process, but Korda, who always looked to the American market would have known about developments at Technicolor. *The House of Rothschild* (20th. Century Fox 1934) and *Kid Millions* (Goldwyn 1935) both contained a Technicolor sequence before *Becky Sharp*. Korda would not have been interested in the Hillman process.

3 The Prudential took all the preferred shares in the company and a lien on all productions. Details of the arrangement between LFP and the Prudential are given in Street, loc. cit., p. 164. The estate, The Fishery, was 165 acres belonging to Lord Forres. LFP had been spending £35 000 a year for 'the cramped and old fashioned' studios at Isleworth. Denham was actually half the price, as a lot; Tabori, op. cit. p. 147.

Korda was able to undertake the kind of film-making enterprise about which he had been dreaming for many years.’¹

Guthrie, Anthony Read and David Fisher show, was an associate of Sir Robert Vansittart and the (MI6) Intelligence Officer, Claude Dansey². The latter, according to their reading, provided Korda’s own initial share in LFP through MI6, and, as Korda could be of considerable potential value to the Intelligence Services, persuaded his informant, Guthrie, to support the Denham venture. Korda was ‘a cosmopolitan character...who was known to travel widely’ and had, as a film-maker, ‘a perfect excuse for carrying out reconnaissances for possible locations...and generally asking questions about anything and everything’.³ LFP, therefore, could offer perfect cover for Dansey’s recruits, Andrew King and Major John Codrington, for example.

¹ Kulik, *op cit.*, p. 120.

² Lt.-Colonel Sir Claude Dansey (1876-1947). After the war, Dansey, now a knight, like Korda himself, became a director of British Lion Film Corporation when Korda took it over in January 1946. Guthrie (1882 -1945), also involved in Intelligence work, was also a board member of United Artists and a member of United Artists Executive Committee. He received a baronetcy in the 1936 New Year Honours for ‘political and public services’, see *KW*, 2 Jan. 1936. When William Stephenson went to New York to establish BSC, Guthrie became Head of the security Division of BSC; Korda, with offices in the the Empire State Building, was nearby. H. Montgomery Hyde, *Room 3603*, New York 1962, was the first to disclose details of Korda’s involvement in SIS during the war. Hyde was Korda’s controller.

³ Anthony Read and David Fisher, *Colonel Z*, London, 1984, pp. 176-179. LFP was registered as a private company, 13 Feb. 1932, with nominal capital of £100 and its Capital was increased ‘by the addition of £20 000 beyond the registered capital of £100’ in Nov. 1932, and again in April 1933, when it rose to £100 000. The last marked the beginning of an expanded period of production. Read and Fisher argue that SIS did not have the resources to fund the expansion; hence its ally in intelligence matters, the Prudential was approached for, presumably, £80 000; Montagu Marks, also an informant, according to this account, also helped persuade the Pru’. It is plausible, but, naturally, there is no formal evidence. Read and Fisher damage the tale by swallowing the absurd *King Pausole* story which Kulik, in her biography of Korda, recounts with understandable caution, pp. 258-260, for the film in question, by Alexis Granowsky, was made too early to be relevant. No explanation is given as to why SIS should go to such expensive and ridiculous lengths to obtain shots of the North African coastline, especially as still photography would have provided better resolution. Hans Casparius, *In My View*, Leamington Spa, 1986, pp. 89-90, provides the most likely explanation of this myth. British Intelligence, probably the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, would have wanted to look at the footage during the war when it was thought it might prove of some use. Casparius describes how it ‘got wind of the fact that I had travelled extensively in Africa and had a sizeable collection of photographs of towns and ports which would be invaluable to both Army and Navy in the African Campaign.’

Ostensibly, they were employed as representatives, although Codrington 'never had any contact with London Film[s] beyond its name and certainly not with Sir Alexander Korda (sic)'.¹ Their time was spent, mostly in collecting information from 'various agents' and in 'a certain amount of "vetting" of potential agents, both at home and abroad.'

But did Korda acquire finance for LFP via this route? Korda and Dansey may well have been in contact for many years, as early as 1919 in fact, as a consequence of 'the abortive red revolution in Hungary' after which Korda was imprisoned by the Horthy regime,² but there is nothing to support the suggestion that Korda was involved in the activities of the Secret Service as early as 1932 or that MI6, itself, provided the initial, or any other, funding for LFP. The most prudent interpretation of available information is that intelligence matters were first broached by Dansey at a later date, most likely in 1936, when Korda took British naturalisation papers. Read and Fisher describe a meeting between the two sometime that year, at the Hotel Bauer au Lac in Zurich, where Dansey outlined his scheme for establishing an intelligence network of seemingly genuine business people.³ Dansey, who 'knew everybody who counted in

1 Letter from Andrew King to author, 28 July 1988; letters from Colonel John Codrington to author, 29 June 1988, 8 July 1988. Codrington joined MI 6 on May 1937, he 'never really had any contact with London Films and certainly not with Alexander Korda about whom I knew absolutely nothing.' It was 'Dansey who arranged an office and the cover of London Films....' After the war, when Dansey helped him with a job, he did meet Korda and became his 'liaison officer', but they 'never discussed or even mentioned intelligence matters.' King only 'gradually realised that he had been extremely useful to MI 6...his contacts with the business world of 'Mit-Europa' were invaluable, and it was really for all this that he got his "K".'; see also Read and Fisher, *op. cit.*, London, 1984, pp. 182-187, according to whom, a number of others operated under the same cover.

2 Anthony Read, letter to author, 5 Feb. 1990. Read suggests the possibility that they first met at this time, although as 'far as one knows, Dansey was never in Hungary...but he was most certainly in Rumania in 1918, and very actively, too.' According to Michael Korda, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-69, a representative of MI5 (sic) in Budapest, a Brigadier Maurice, was instrumental in getting Korda out of prison and suggested that he came to Britain where he would do very well. '... I know people who could be of help to you', he is supposed to have said to Korda. This is possibly a reference to Dansey, yet when they first met is anyone's guess.

3 Read and Fisher, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180; Christopher Andrew, *Secret Service*, p. 382. Andrew continues, 'The principal intelligence sources of the Z organisation were refugees from Nazi persecution, some of them financed by Korda' Andrew writes, p. 380, that the idea of using

the world of finance and could persuade many of them to put up money to supplement official funds,¹ had probably introduced Korda to Guthrie but as there is no evidence either way, it could just as easily have been the other way round.

As we know, Korda had considerable difficulty in completing *Henry VIII* and was helped out by Toeplitz. For the Read-Fisher thesis to be valid, it would mean that LFP was operating within an inconceivable scenario; not only would its fortunes have been inextricably linked to MI6 from the beginning, but the Prudential, who with its own links to MI6 was also involved, withdrew its support from LFP in 1937 at the very point when its intelligence cover in Europe was likely to be of maximum value to Dansey. The informal links which Dansey provided did not cloud the Prudential's business judgements. Its interest in Korda and London Films took place approximately nine months after the launch of *Henry VIII*, when it had already shown itself to be commercially profitable; there is no documentary evidence that investment decisions on the part of the Prudential were based on anything other than commercial judgement.

Korda courted financial difficulties with a secondary extravagance during the thirties, namely helping his friends, 'with money he could ill afford,' to leave Germany.² Typically, in 1933, he invested £10 000 in a play at His Majesty's Theatre, where the Hungarian-born Eugene Robert attempted to start a London career,

1 Anthony Read, letter to author, op. cit..

2 Michael Korda, op. cit., p. 86. Michael Korda claims, not quite correctly, that Korda persuaded Max Reinhardt, Lajos Biró and Gabriel Pascal to leave Germany, Ibid. One example can be cited with confidence. *PPB*, 7 Sept. 1953 notes: 'we don't have to tell you how helpful he always was to everybody who knocked at his door — he even bought a script by the late Alfred Kerr before the war.' According to Richard Dove, a letter in the Akademie der Künste identifies it as a scenario on the life of Napoleon's mother, 'a film about Napoleon without Napoleon'. Kerr, who was living in Paris, was paid £1 000, the first of two proposed equal payments, which enabled him to move to England. The second instalment was to be paid when the film went into production but nothing more was heard of it and Kulik, pp. 385-387, who provides a useful list of announced projects by Korda does not include the Napoleon film.

but it failed badly.¹ He was extravagant in other ways; after *Henry VIII* and *The Rise of Catherine the Great*, Korda had bought Toeplitz out of London Films for £100 000 and went on to borrow more from the Sutros² and from C.T. Bowring, the insurance brokers.³ He commissioned a completed script for a Jubilee film from Winston Churchill in 1934 for £10 000, although, as the film did not go ahead, Churchill was disappointed to receive only £4 000, for 'all my labours, which have been arduous'⁴ Subsequently Korda placed him on a £2 000 retainer to 'write such scripts as may be needed' for any short films which he proposed making, as well as a separate fee of £1 000 for writing the script for *Conquest of the Air*. Even more substantially, at some point, he purchased the film rights to Churchill's novel *Savrola*.⁵

In fact Korda was all over the place. He diversified without capital; his repertory of young players, Merle Oberon, Binnie Barnes, Wendy Barrie, Joan Gardner, Pearl Argyle, Robert Donat and the like, were known as 'Korda's Follies'.⁶ He had appointed Fernand Léger to 'paint designs for H.G. Wells' *Shape of Things to Come* (sic)....But Wells...had other ideas.'⁷ Léger and Siepmann sat outside his office, not knowing what they were supposed to do. To settle arguments over the design for the

1 Tabori, op. cit. p. 136.

2 Leopold Sutro, the City banker. Others who had been persuaded to invest in London Film Productions were French Pathé, George Grossmith, Captain Arthur Dixey, and Lord Lurgan. Richard Norton had been instrumental in finding the starting money, thought to be between £12 000 and £20 000, for *Henry VIII*. Tabori, op. cit. p. 129, writes that Toeplitz thought that *The Girl From Maxim's* was a more commercial property than *Henry* and chose it as part of his settlement with LFP. The directors at the inception of LFP in Feb. 1932, were George Grossmith (Man. Dir.), Korda, Toeplitz (Man. Dir.), J.R.Sutro, and Sydney Baker.

3 Lejeune, loc. cit. Lejeune notes that Korda 'got a substantial loan', their representative, Stevinson, coming on to the board of London Films. Kulik, in her biography of Korda, uncharacteristically, fails to unravel the web of financial intrigue. Loans were also made by the Midland and by Lloyds banks. Bowring was one of the leading lights in the funding of films and was mentioned in the Capitol affair.

4 Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill Vol.V*, London, 1983, p. 561, pp. 589-591. He completed the script on 14 Jan. 1935. Gilbert points out that he plundered the script for a series of articles for the *Daily Mail* and, in the end, earned more than his £10 000 from it.

5 H. Montgomery Hyde, *Secret Intelligence Agent*, London, 1982, pp. 164-165.

6 Tabori, op. cit. p. 134. Some of 'The Follies' had good careers.

7 Siepmann, op. cit., London, 1935, p. 133.

costumes, Korda decided to run a competition for which the short-lived animation unit entered. The young animator, Kathe Houston was a member of the team working on *The Fox Hunt* at Isleworth and remembers that it was really an attempt to assure Wells of the quality of his judgement; his 'mind was already made up, of course, but unfortunately H. G. Wells liked our designs best. Korda said — with his thick Hungarian accent — "They are very beautiful but, my dear, how would we ever find men to fit them," and the work went to John Armstrong and René Hubert, as he'd wanted in the first place.'¹ The one film for which Siepmann received an 'enormous credit occupying the whole of the screen', *Moscow Nights* (Denham Productions-LFP-Capitol 1936, dir. Anthony Asquith) contained none of his own lines and he resigned.² In 1935 Korda sent for Carol Reed, who had done a few small pictures, wanting him to direct *The Scarlet Pimpernel* but he was soon pleading script problems and offered him instead 'a few smaller pictures...with Elsa Lanchester....'³ In January 1936, he announced a production of *Hamlet* with Robert Donat, to be directed by William Cameron Menzies from a screenplay by Miles Maleson but it was not made. It was typical Korda management, in which his constant vacillation and perpetual interference went hand in hand; frustrated as a director, for he was only a modestly competent one, he overlorded the direction of others. He was a 'good technician' with 'a good eye for spectacle, but he was unable 'to use a dramatic situation actively.' He could 'place drama in a tableau but not as part of a story.'⁴

1 Kathe 'Spuds' Houston to author, 9 May 1989. *The Fox Hunt* (1936) is a Technicolor cartoon, with music by Mischa Spoliansky, directed by Hector Hoppin and Anthony Gross.

2 In fact Siepmann's credit is not spectacular, just normal. *Moscow Nights* is a particularly interesting example of a kind of bi lingual. It was originally directed by Alexis Granowsky in France as *Les Nuits de Moscou*. Granowsky produced the English version with Max Schach and utilised footage from the original. Footage from other films was often re-used in various ways, but a careful study shows that not only were all the exteriors utilised but shots from the original, especially when there is no English dialogue, were inserted into sequences in Asquith's version. Harry Bauer singing with a Gypsy band, or walking across the room might well turn out to be a shot from the French version. In addition, the French actor, Harry Bauer who could speak no English and plays Brioukow, a peasant war profiteer was re voiced, probably by Walter Hudd.

3 Tabori, op. cit. p. 155.

4 Oliver Baldwin, *Picturegoer*, Aug. 10 1935, pp. 8 9. He continues that Korda lacks 'the true sense of "theatre" without which a story cannot grip. Baldwin is very funny about Korda's

As his weaknesses became widely known, *WFN* pointed out that Korda was in danger of over-reaching:

There is plenty of vision down there [at London films] but possibly not enough thought for the day after tomorrow. Korda's development from director to producer and producer to financier has been swift from an organisational point of view. American studios have expensively discovered that responsibility must be shared!¹

Korda and Film Money

As LFP ran into difficulties, a lengthy report by F.M. Guedella to UA in America described the 'burgeoning film Empire' with losses of £330 842. 'Murray Silverstone believes that the figure today would be...£1,000 000.' The Prudential claimed to have advanced about £2 000 000 and were meeting a pay-roll of about £20 000 a week. It details most of Korda's misdemeanours: his extravagance, his poor management, his lack of concern about the company's indebtedness. 'If [the Prudential] decide to stop financing LFP, then the whole show blows up immediately.'²

This remarkably perceptive report confirms all that is now known about Korda. Whatever the links were which existed between Korda, the Prudential and British Intelligence, it did not inhibit commercial judgements from being made. When Korda lost Denham, the 'Prudential by no means abandoned him.' He was given \$1.8 million to form Alexander Korda Film Productions Ltd. and half of the Prudential's interest in the UA stock along with voting rights to the full unit. 'However, there remained on the stock an unpaid balance of \$550 000, which Korda was personally

Lawrence of Arabia project: 'I wish he wouldn't. The real drama of such a picture could only be in the personality of Colonel Lawrence and his fight with authority, and it is not possible to show either. Therefore, Zoltan Korda will be left with camels and horses and tribesmen blowing up railway lines'

¹ *WFN*, April 1936, p. 13. This reads like Grierson's hand.

² Quoted in Tino Balio, *United Artists*, London, 1976, pp. 145-6.

liable for.’¹ When Korda was forced to transplant the unfinished *The Thief of Bagdad* to Hollywood for completion, the British government ‘required that he place directive control of his financial activities in the hands of the Bank of England, through the Foreign Exchange Control Board,’ assuming that they could compel him to transfer the principal along with any profits, to England and contribute a certain amount of dollar exchange.²

As usual with Korda, there were complicated business arrangements and considerable speculation.³ His financial management did not improve and production costs on his war-time American films exceeded his budget. In order to keep costs down on *That Hamilton Woman* (1941) all the scenes in Sir William Hamilton’s house in Naples were shot against a single composite set and much of it was made ‘off the cuff’ with Walter Reisch, R.C. Sherriff, Korda and Olivier improvising dialogue on the set.⁴ Although the Bank of England guaranteed another loan, Korda was obliged to repay it by returning all his profits on *The Thief of Bagdad* and any subsequent profits on other films to England, which left him without ‘the collateral to

1 Ibid., p. 154. Alexander Korda Productions was formed with a capital of £530 000, £330 000 was a loan from the Prudential Assurance Company, *KW*, 23 March 1939. Details of how Korda came to purchase the shares which the Prudential owned in United Artists and which enabled him to become ‘a full-fledged partner,’ are given in Ballo, op. cit., p. 186. ff. See also *KW*, 21 April 1938: ‘Korda would be welcomed with open arms by other American distributors and has in fact, been approached by two. So Korda held the whip hand.... Korda could almost dictate his own terms, and they quickly found that those terms were stringent.... So without it costing him anything, Korda seems certain now to get the terms for which six months ago, he was prepared to buy half United Artists.’ He sold his 20 % interest in UA in April 1944 for \$950 000 and paid \$1 million to the UK Treasury.

2 Tino Ballo, op. cit., p. 172.

3 *KW*, 23 May 1940 On 25 April 1940, for example, it was announced that negotiations were taking place with the National Security Bank of Los Angeles and the Bankers Trust Company of New York to advance Korda £800 000 to finance four Hollywood productions and £100 000 for two productions in London.

4 Felix Barker, *The Oliviers*, London, 1953, p. 183. Sherriff had written the screenplay of *The Four Feathers* and later joined Alexander Korda Productions as scenario writer and literary adviser, see *The Times*, 9 May 1939. It was precisely this kind of extemporised film-making which had been so widely condemned in Britain during the 1930s. Wilcox had planned ‘A Nelson Film’, as early as Jan. 1938, with Anna Neagle as *Lady Hamilton*. The script had been submitted to the Hays Office, according to *The Times*, 27 Jan. 1938.

secure financing for additional production work in the United States.’¹ Balio suggests this as a reason for his return to Britain where, in 1943, he sold his interest in Denham Laboratories to Rank, bought back his films from the Prudential and started London Film Productions again.²

As we have seen, Korda was partial to fantasy accountancy, and the mythical production cost of *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, £60 000 became the target budget for a British feature film. In fact it had cost around £94 000, a feature disguised by its commercial success.³ When, in April 1934, Paul Rotha attempted to persuade him to sponsor ‘a modest documentary unit of his own’, Korda was ‘sympathetic’ but ‘very short on production money. He says he drew even on his first two films but has lost since then.’⁴ If Schach was profligate, Korda had led the way. *Sanders of the River* (1935) had cost £165 235,⁵ *The Ghost Goes West* (1936), £142 546.⁶ Korda, with a more imaginative distribution arrangement in the USA than Schach, could squander money too although the story still remains incomplete. Always optimistic about finance, he was asked if *Things to Come* would break even, and is reputed to have replied, ‘Of course. it was an expensive effort but we’re only a few thousand out at the moment’.⁷ When told that *Rembrandt* wouldn’t recover its costs, he replied, ‘I know — but it is very beautiful.’⁸ It had cost around £140 000 and the net receipts to LFP were about a quarter of it. He did not change over the years and retained the same ebullience long after the war, when the National Film Finance Corporation funded

1 Tino Balio, op. cit., p. 172.

2 Tabori, op. cit. p. 236. Steven Pallos acted as the intermediary and the price was £42 500.

3 See Street, loc. cit., p. 171.

4 Rotha, *Documentary Diary*, London, 1973, p. 112. Korda may, of course, have been applying his legendary tact.

5 Cunynghame Collection, £1 400 had been paid for story rights and £11 364 had been spent on location shooting.

6 Ibid. £156, 062. is the figure quoted by Street, loc. cit., p. 171. *Men Are Not Gods* (1936) had cost a little over £106 000; Street quotes a lower figure of £93, 362. According to Paul Holt in the *Daily Express*, *Fire Over England* (Pendennis 1937, dir. William K. Howard) cost £75 000.

7 Tabori, op. cit. p. 16. *Things to Come* took £120 000, less than half its cost, see below; also Street, loc. cit., pp. 161-179.

8 Tabori, op. cit. p. 165.

Bonnie Prince Charlie (1948); at a cost of £750000, it was another disaster. His genial response to the concerned Harold Wilson, then President of the BoT, was 'Ah, just wait until you see my next.'¹

Schach: 'The Pocket Battleship of British Films'

What is actually known about Schach? Is there anything in his background which throws light on his activities in Britain? Almost all the accepted biographical data on Schach is inaccurate and a complicated personal life can only be part of the explanation. He was known as Max Schach, although naturalisation information reveals his name as Schacherl.² His date and place of birth, generally thought to be 1890 in Vienna, but sometimes believed to be in Czechoslovakia, can now be said, from Home Office information, to have been four years earlier, 2 May 1886, in Zenta, Hungary.³ According to other sources, for the twelve years before he began producing films around 1918, he was film and theatre critic for *Berliner Tagblatt*. In 1919, he began his collaboration with Karl Grune, who, it is claimed, began his interest in films watching the faces of foreign soldiers, whom he couldn't understand, during the first world war;⁴ his first film as director, *Der Mädchenhirt* (1919), was written for the screen with Schach's wife, Beate.⁵ In 1920, Schach joined UFA as a scenario editor, but soon switched roles to produce Grune's only important film, *Die Strasse* (1923).

1 Harold Wilson, *The Making of a Prime Minister*, 1916-64, London, 1986, p. 105.

2 *The London Gazette* 11 March 1952. HO letter to author, 1 Jan. 1990. Early German reference books, and pre-war editions of *IMPA* give his date of birth, incorrectly, as 1890 and his place of birth as Vienna. The *London Gazette* gives his nationality at the time of his naturalisation, on 25 February, 1952, as Czechoslovakian.

3 Zenta, now Senta, in the North East of Yugoslavia, close to the Hungarian-Yugoslav border.

4 He was previously an actor and director of Residenttheater, Berlin.

5 Bernhard Zeller, ed., *Hatte ich das Kino*, Munich, 1976, p. 234. *Der Mädchenhirt* is described as 'a tragedy in five scenes' from the novel by Egon Erwin Kirsch.

Thereafter Grune was always closely associated with Schach.¹ Schach became the General Manager for Universal in Europe, and eventually director of Emelka, which owned four studios, a distributing company and a small chain of cinemas.

Not everyone found him as light-hearted as his publicity officer in London, Monja Danischewsky, was later to do. 'I was to play the Demütige [in *Der Demütige und die Sängerin*],' wrote the actor Hugh Miller to Ivor Montagu, a short while after Schach had established himself as a producer in Germany, 'and it fell through because of the vitriolic disposition of Max Schach.' Miller, angry and disappointed at his failure to get the part in a film directed by E.A Dupont, sent Schach's private agent, Horzetsky, a few photographs from *The City of Temptation*, in which he had appeared, and provocatively added that the previous week, he had been briefly in Griedrechstraße, where Schach had his offices, 'but had only time to spit on the doorstep of 223.' Horzetsky, as Miller expected, passed the letter to Schach 'who nearly consumed the building in his fury...'.²

The high-point of both Grune and Schach's careers in Germany, should have been their period at Emelka, the Munich film-producing company of which he was managing director, but it was a fiasco, a prelude for later events at Capitol. In late 1931 they were involved in a scandal at Emelka which was closely followed by the Berlin-daily film paper, *Film-Kurier*. After the introduction of sound, Emelka Studios, like many companies in Germany, other than UFA and Tobis, made nothing for some time and Schach had launched its restarting with 'a flourish of trumpets,'³ producing its first sound film, *Der brave Sünder*.⁴ But there had been a mismanagement of funds.

1 In England, Grune co produced one film without Schach, *The Silver Darlings* (Holyrood 1947, dir. Clarence Elder and Clifford Evans), set in the Hebridean islands. He also had one long-term project, derived from the Bible, which came to nothing.

2 Miller to Montagu, 26 April 1925, Montagu Papers. He was hoping that Gaumont-British would be able to offer him a contract so that he could return to England.

3 KW, 17 Dec. 1931.

4 Directed and co written by Fritz Kortner, it starred Max Pallenberg, Dolly Haas and Heinz Rühmann; it was one of the many musicals of the time and was well, if not rapturously, received.

Even whilst Schach was singing the film's praises and claiming that he had found a new way to produce even 'richer' films, it was clear that Emelka was in financial difficulties, for he was telling the press that the Commercial Manager of Emelka, Krauss, had stabilised the position. The film had proved expensive and in order to proceed with his programme, Schach had arranged financial backing from Kohan, a Swiss banker, who owned 62 % of the Emelka shares and had options on a further 14 %, whilst the balance was owned by the State.¹ Christoph Mülleneisen, a financial manager who represented Kohan's interests, and a director on the Emelka board, occupying a similar position to Bayliss Smith on the Trafalgar Films board a few years later, was, not surprisingly, being touted as a replacement to Schach. He endeavoured to salvage the company through a range of financial arrangements to a commercial bank and to Tobis (which was already developing a sound-film programme of its own), as well as to Pathé in France.² Schach, without a leg to stand on, simply blustered; Kohan and Mülleneisen by-passed him.³ For a while it looked as though he would survive, but suddenly he was out and Grune, who had always threatened to resign if Schach went, left with him. In addition to the charge of financial mismanagement, there was the suggestion of embezzlement; according to Hans Feld, editor of *Film-Kurier*, their departure from Emelka was also related to the 'hiding of slush-funds for publicity purposes by the (illegal) forces of the Reichswehr and Marine,' although there is no independent evidence for this.⁴

¹ *F-K* 17 Oct. 1931; *KW*, 17 Dec. 1931.

² *KW*, 17 Dec. 1931

³ *F-K*, 14 Dec. 1931. On 15 Dec. *F-K* announced that finance had been found in the private sector, 'personal differences' between Schach and the Board were behind them. The company was to be reorganised and Schach's 'baby' programme [ie. reduced programme] instituted, with Karl Grune as head of production. There were three completed films, one in production, and four short-sound films. On the 17 Dec. *F-K* detailed a financial arrangement with Kohan, Corniglieu, and Pathé. 'Bestätigung: Schach und Grune bleiben' [Schach and Grune to stay] was *F-K*'s headline of 21 Dec. 1931.

⁴ Letter from Hans Feld to author, 28 April 1988. Feld claims that *F-K*, which he was editing, 'exposed the actors,' but there is no mention of embezzlement in *F-K*. Possibly he is compressing events in his memory and relating the Schach affair at Emelka with the earlier Phoebus scandal.

If Schach earned any money in Germany, it disappeared between his leaving Emelka Studios in December 1931 and his arrival in France. He, along with Grune, had travelled to Paris, where they hoped to re-establish themselves. Grune was able to direct a French language version of his final German film, *Das Gelbe Haus des King-Fu* (*La Maison Jaune*, 1932), but they were down on their luck. When Lore Leni, the widow of the film director Paul Leni met him there, he had barely enough money to buy two cups of coffee.¹

Both Schach and Karl Grune later described themselves as powerful and influential figures in the German film industry, who had had differences 'of opinion with the Hitler regime', but they had left Germany almost a full year before Hitler came to power. In Britain, they presented themselves as refugees, Schach arriving on 16 May 1934, Grune, somewhat earlier. If they were deceitful over this, others, with less good reason, had done the same.² With a scandal behind them, it was necessary to present a cover story.

Schach soon established a series of film production companies in Britain, starting with Capitol Film Productions. In July 1934, it was transformed into the Capitol Film Corporation, which included Trafalgar Films Ltd., Buckingham Films Ltd., and Cecil Films Ltd., and a number of other companies.³ He contracted stars, bought rights, and produced less than he appeared to be doing, a point well made in Vicky's cartoons for *WFN*. In this respect, however, he was less different from Korda than is generally

1 *KW*, 13 Feb. 1936. Like so much that was written about Schach at the time it reads like the work of the publicity department. Lore Leni Cowan, joined Wilcox as a screenwriter and associate producer, after the war.

2 Bomeman, for example, had come here for personal reasons and allowed people to believe he was a political refugee.

3 Capitol Film Productions Ltd. Co. Registered July 12, 1934, Reg No. 304532. Nominal capital £100 in £1 shares. Directors were Schach, Grune, and Louis A. Neel, Henry A. Proctor, MP. Later expanded to £125,000 capital in 5s. shares. Directors qualifications £100 each. Remuneration of £200 per annum, £250 for Chairman. Capitol Film Corporation, formed 29 August, 1935.

thought, for Korda also floated numerous kites, kept people on salary, failed to use them and, notoriously, purchased the rights to works he did not intend to make.¹ Schach, possibly taking a lead from Korda, bought people up in the same way, although he frequently paid them even more. He signed Victor Trivas, the Russian art director who had worked with Pabst and had made *Niemandslund* (1931) to direct, but nothing came of it.² In April 1936, Walter Forde was signed at a fee of £6 500 but without a subject.³ 'The story has not yet been decided', noted *Kine*, 'but is expected to be fixed this week. Production will not start until August....His new salary is understood to be a record for a single picture.'⁴ Frances Marion, the American screenwriter was paid £600 a week to adapt Frank Vosper's play, the disastrous and expensive *Love from a Stranger*.⁵ Richard Tauber received £40 000 for his performance in *Pagliacci*. It was extravagant bad management certainly, but Korda, with better advisers, was capable of the same. Certainly, the films Schach produced could be over-budgeted and poorly distributed, but it is difficult to determine from currently available sources that he was more of a rogue than Korda. As late as 1944 one of Capitol's directors, Major Henry Proctor, was drawing attention to the problems of achieving satisfactory distribution in America and lamenting the failure of *Love from a Stranger*.⁶

1 Overall, the number of films funded for Schach was twenty-six, of which fourteen were finished, plus the French version of one other film.

2 *WIN*, April 1936, p. 7.

3 He had been paid £750 at the point when Capitol's difficulties became known.

4 *KW*, 30 April 1936. The project was eventually announced as *Pickwick*, a Dickens adaptation; it was abandoned in early pre-production when MGM announced its own, see *KW*, 25 March, 1937.

5 Paul Holt, *Daily Express*, 12 Jan. 1937.

6 Parliamentary Debates, 20 December, 1944, [1844]; Major Henry Proctor (1883-1955), Conservative MP for Accrington 1931-45; Proctor was arguing for American production in Britain. *Dreaming Lips* and *Love from a Stranger* had been refused by [American] exhibitors, who claimed that they were unfit to be shown.', see, Tino Balio, op. cit. p. 145. Both were Schach productions for one of his Capitol Film Corporation companies, Trafalgar. G. W. Parish, Chairman and Managing Director of British National Films, for whom Powell and Pressburger, Thorold Dickinson, and Leslie Howard had directed, complained that in 1943 not one British film had been distributed in the United States. Four earlier films produced at Denham, had been distributed in the USA: *Contraband*, *Gaslight*, *Pimpernel Smith*, and *One of Our Aircraft is*

Money ran like water for both Korda and Schach, and Schach, as he had at Emelka, mismanaged the finances of CFC. Schach had no grasp of financial control and, although the money was slipping away, was unable to take hold of the situation. For Bergner's birthday on *Dreaming Lips* (a film which was devouring money) in August 1936 Schach filled her dressing room with flowers and added a note, 'Dear Elisabeth, Many happy birthdays to come, but not on my pictures.'¹

When the already widely experienced producer, Ian Dalrymple, met Schach during 'a rather dodgy hiatus' between leaving Gaumont-British and finding another job, he 'thumped his desk, said *he* didn't want silly films like G-B's and rose majestically.... As Tony Asquith observed, he was the only man he'd met who was shorter when he stood on his feet.'² Danischewsky and his colleagues had launched him as 'The Pocket Battleship of British films' who 'was 'never lost for a good press story.'

Korda and Schach at War.

It is now well established that during the early part of the war, when Korda was in the USA, he became more directly involved in the gathering of Intelligence information for the British Government and, also, played a role as 'a King's messenger'.³ He had been branded a coward by a number of people who had later to

Missing. They had involved an agreement by which 'we were compelled to surrender various rights, and in no case was the name of British National Films Limited shown on the screens in the United States....', letter *The Times*, 3 Dec. 1943.

1 Monja Danischewsky, interview with author, 8 December, 1989. Danischewsky eventually became a screen-writer and producer of *Rockets Galore!*, (Rank 1958, dir. Basil Dearden).

2 Ian Dalrymple, letter to author, 11 Nov. 1987. Asquith was contracted to direct a film for Capitol for £2 300. He received £800, but it was not made due to the collapse of the company. See also, Monja Danischewsky, *White Russian — Red Face*, London, 1966, pp. 105-7.

3 Hyde, *Room 3603*, op. cit.; Hyde, *Secret Intelligence Agent*, op. cit.; Andrew, op. cit.; Read and Fisher, op. cit.; William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid*. London 1976; Jympson Harman, 'Alex': A Study of Korda', *BFY* 1949-50, p. 109, '...he made twenty-eight Atlantic crossings, many of them painful journeys in bombers.' Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *The Diaries*, Vol. II, London, 1980, noted on the 3 March 1942 that Korda had just returned on one of these trips. Lockhart was meeting with Brendan Bracken 'who was with Korda (just back from the USA).'

eat their words, significantly by Michael Balcon¹ and Lord Brabazon, as late as 1944, believed Korda had gone to America to avoid the bombing.² The author, William Stevenson, however, hints heavily that Korda was also engaged in the activities of Camp X, a secret operations camp, just inside the Canadian border and a satellite of the New York headquarters of BSC in the Rockefeller Centre,³ which ‘involved a film producer, a set designer from Hollywood, and a French actress whose lover was a German double agent’.⁴ According to Stevenson, it forged documents, camouflaged explosives, controlled spying and planned assassinations.⁵ Vincent Korda, looking and acting, ‘like Groucho Marx’,⁶ provided locales constructed from plans and photographs ‘in Nazi territories so that missions could be rehearsed’.⁷ It is a good story, probably true with respect to Vincent, but there is no evidence that Alex was ever at Camp X. Indeed, it is uncertain that the assassination of Heydrich which

1 Michael Balcon, *Michael Balcon Presents*, London, 1969, p. 93. ‘Korda,’ he wrote ‘was generous in his forgiveness of the one or two unseemly cracks I made.’ Balcon did not feel he was wrong about some of the others who had gone to America.

2 Parliamentary Proceedings, House of Lords, 23 Feb. 1944 [1930]. Brabazon, a director of Kodak, said, ‘The great Sir Alexander Korda went to America — quite rightly; nightly bombing and the production of films do not go hand in hand — but Mr. Rank carried on.... Times are better from the point of view of bombing, and back comes Sir Alexander Korda...this time as a representative of Metro-Goldwyn’ Earlier, Brabazon had raised the question of Ernst H. Meyer, an alien, working at the GPO Film Unit. Meyer was obliged to leave; letter from Marjorie Meyer to author 13 Aug. 1990.

3 H. Montgomery Hyde, *Secret Intelligence Agent*, op cit, p. 160 f.; Stevenson, op. cit., London, 1976, p. 187ff.

4 Stevenson, op cit., p. 187.

5 Other figures said to be associated with SIS included a number from the entertainment industries. Eric Maschwitz writes about it in his autobiography, *No Chip on my Shoulder*, London 1957. Others are: the art director and screenwriter, J. Elder Wills, who drew on his early war experiences for *Against the Wind* (Ealing 1948), the playwright and Labour MP 1945-50 Ben Levy, Carol Reed, Vincent Korda; and the stage magician and illusionist Jasper Maskelyne. Wills, who escaped from Dunkirk, specialised in camouflage.

6 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 348. Stevenson mistakenly refers to Zoltan when he means Vincent. Hyde makes it clear that of all the figures supposedly engaged in secret intelligence work during the war, for example, Greta Garbo, Errol Flynn (who is also believed to have been a double agent) and Noel Coward, ‘none of them were...except for the Kordas, Alex and Vincent....’ Hyde, op cit, p. 163. The story that Leslie Howard was on a mission for SIS at the time of his death, is also firmly discounted.

7 Stevenson, op. cit., p. 197ff.

Stevenson suggests was planned there had anything to do with SIS at all.¹ Instead, H. Montgomery Hyde had been sent to Hollywood in 1940 to discuss ways 'by which Korda, with his extensive connections in the motion-picture world, could help....'² His main role was the collection of intelligence information.

On the other hand, we can say even less with confidence about Schach's war time experiences. They are certainly less glamorous and, consistent with his other aspects of his life, little or nothing is known about them. Low writes of Schach as quietly disappearing from the British film industry, at the point when his companies collapsed.³ 'He was,' however, according to Ian Dalrymple, 'one of a triumvirate with Elizabeth (sic) Bergner and her husband, Paul Czinner. When Micky Powell wanted to play Bergner in *49th Parallel* for a very special role as a German...in the wilds of Canada, she refused to go unless the other two went with her. She promised to return to [the] UK for the necessary covering studio shots.... The three simply used the passage to the USA...to escape....'⁴

1 According to Stevenson, Vincent Korda worked on the enactment of the assassination of Heydrich for months without knowing, but it was an SOE and not a SIS operation.

2 Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 160. Harford Montgomery Hyde (1907-1989), originally a barrister, joined the Intelligence Corps in 1940 and became Korda's legal adviser, adviser to London Films-British Lion 1947-49, responsible for *An Ideal Husband*, *The Third Man*, etc. He was Ulster Unionist MP for Belfast North 1950-59.

3 Low, *Film Making*, p. 207.

4 Ian Dalrymple, letter to author, *op. cit.* The Bergner story here is a variation on the much told tale of *49th Parallel* and should not be discounted for in her memoirs, Elisabeth Bergner, *Bewundert viel und viel gescholten*, Munich, 1978, she admits to planning an escape by trading an exit permit from Britain for her signature on the contract to appear in it. 'It was because of my acceptance that these two young men [Powell and Pressburger] got the necessary finance and I got my exit permit,' p. 191. She smuggled jewellery out of England sewn into the hems of her clothes and gives one of her reasons as 'I didn't want to report to police any more.' She was already British and wouldn't have had to report to the police. Others on *49th Parallel*, revealed a different spirit. Walbrook gave his salary to the British Red Cross and Pressburger, who had made three trips to Canada and was now classified as an enemy alien, only agreed to go on the first place on the understanding that he would be given a re-entry permit to Britain. See *KW*, 5 Dec. 1940. *KW* asked why Bergner should have been paid £2 000 'for a part which is now being played in England by Glynis Johns.' Nevertheless, Schach's whereabouts during the war remained unconfirmed at the time of writing and Bergner does not mention him in her memoirs. He was certainly in England soon after the war when *PPB*, 12 Feb. 1946 recorded, 'Otto Hoellering (sic) and Max Schach discussed a project for film production in two languages, but abandoned the idea.' When he was naturalised in 1952, Schach gave his address as Bournemouth

Two Views of the 'International Film'

There is then, as Sarah Street has suggested, less to choose between Schach and Korda as financial managers than might be supposed. Yet, there is everything to choose between them in other respects. They were as different as personalities as they were as film-makers. Korda had some grasp of the market, of distribution and exhibition; Schach had none. If Korda became an Anglophile and quickly saw himself as part of the establishment, Schach did nothing of the kind and moved in the shadows. Korda saw himself associated with the first rank of film-makers from Europe and America and drew on their talents to internationalise his films. He saw, epitomised in the name of his company, that his future base and interests were to be identified with England. Schach's imagination remained in Vienna and Berlin and his associates were mostly from the second rank of creative personalities: Grune, Czinner, Isadore Goldschmidt, Fred Zelnik, most of whom seem to have spent large parts of their lives in Vienna¹. It amused his press officer, the young Monja Danischewsky, when the 'wizened face' Schach charmed journalists with stories of his playing with Bergner and Ernst Lubitsch as children in a poor part of the city.² It was a typical embellishment of his autobiography, another new anecdote for the press, and certainly not hyperbole.³ Even the name of his major company, Capitol Film Corporation,

and his occupation as film producer and adviser; he died in Chelsea on 3 August 1957, aged 71, his occupation, according to a copy of his death certificate, being 'Business Agent'.

1 Grune, for example, was born in Vienna, a Czechoslovakian citizen. Schach's companies were mostly German speaking.

2 Monja Danischewsky to author, 8 Dec. 1989; *White Russian — Red Face*, op. cit., p. 105-107. Bergner, born in 1897, was more than ten years younger. They probably met only in 1925 when Czinner first became associated with Schach and Grune, providing the scenario for *Eifersucht* (Jealousy), which Schach produced for Stern Film GmbH (Stern-Film der UFA). Later Danischewsky was to become Head of Publicity at Ealing and, according to Harry Watt responsible for attracting both Cavalcanti and himself to work there, see. Harry Watt, *Don't Look at the Camera*, London, 1974, p. 188.

3 FW, 17 Aug., 1934, notes, for example, that Paul Stein was a friend of Tauber's in Vienna.

suggests less the ancient temple of Jupiter than the name of a well known cinema in Berlin. His interest in British life and culture was minimal; his grasp of the kind of 'commercial' cinema which would stand up in the American market, non-existent. Danischewsky describes the much-publicised charity premiere for *Dreaming Lips* in February 1937, which was attended by 'the late Queen Mary, then Queen Mother,' at her first public appearance since the death of King George V, a year earlier.¹ Schach, in his ignorance of British etiquette, wanted to abandon the National anthem for the occasion and get the Kneller Hall Trumpeters' Band to play *Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag* instead and was extremely reluctant to take advice. 'I have lived in zis country for two years — and look vere I am, and look vere you are,' he chided his press officer.²

Along with the domestic cinema and the 'International' films of the Korda formulation, there were then those films which did not simply feature émigré personalities, interests and concerns, but which were preoccupied with them. Schach's films fall into this category; *Abdul the Damned*, *Pagliacci*, *The Marriage of Corbal*, even *The Spy of Napoleon*, all suggest an attempt to preserve a culture which was now all but lost and all, elliptically, make use of the tragedy of exile.

Korda grasped, early on in the 1930s, that the American market was essential for a British film industry which was soon to be entirely cut off from Germany. Schach not only ignored the implications for cinema of this loss, he made no attempt to adjust his taste in cinema to that which may have been applicable to Britain or America. There is no indication, apart from his boasting, that he understood the international market at all.

¹ *Dreaming Lips* (Trafalgar Films 1937, dir. Czinner) was another version of the play, *Melo*, by Henri Bernstein and the film *Der Träumende Munde*, which Czinner had made five years before. Naturally it had Bergner in the cast. Yet again Czinner was involved, this time on the script of a later version in 1952, which was made by Josef von Baky. All of them derive from Carl Mayer's original 1932 version and Mayer was involved again in the 1937 version.

² Danischewsky, op. cit., p. 108-109.

Schach relied on finding actors from Korda's stable of performers and on renting his studio space. In contrast to Korda, he did not look towards British writers. When invited by *WFN*, to explain his policy towards 'young [British] scenario writers', Schach commented that however 'rich in ideas and the constructive faculty' they may be, 'they often lack the "shooting script technique", common to Hollywood writers.'¹ He did employ British writers alongside any foreign writers on the pay-roll and there were three on the staff at the time of writing, Ernest Betts, who was earning £50 per week as a scenario editor, Roger d'Est Burford [Roger Burford], and Denis Waldock.² His claim to have an instinct for the popular picture was without evidence to support it. 'If I make a picture to please myself, I make money. If I try to make a picture to please the public, I lose',³ is a comment which throws considerable light on his narcissistic characteristics as a producer and his failure to come to terms with commercial cinema.

¹ *WFN*, May 1936.

² Waldock had worked in Berlin and Paris before joining BIP in 1935, working on Paul Stein's *Mimi*. He collaborated, also, on three of the Capitol scripts: *Mademoiselle Docteur*, *Pagliacci* and *Love in Exile*. During the war he was a writer for the BBC's European Service, at the same time dabbling in theatre revues and plays, sometimes with Roger Burford. Burford, the most experienced of the three, had collaborated on the screenplay of *Red Wagon* (BIP 1933, dir. Paul Stein), *Girls Will Be Boys* and *Abdul the Damned*. He collaborated with Denis Waldock on the play *Jam Today*, (St. Martin's Theatre, 1942.), wrote a number of detective novels, and was Films Attaché in Moscow 1944-45.

³ Campbell Dixon, *Daily Telegraph*, [?] March 1935, undated clipping, BFI.

The 'Film Debacle' of 1937

The spending of nearly all the big money is in the hands of non-British chiefs.... It is the foreign directors and the foreign studio chiefs, who have done most of the squandering that provoked a financial crisis a few months ago.
P.L.Mannock, 'Foreign Menace to British Production',
Kine, 26 Aug., 1937. p.63.

The first annual report of the Cinematograph Films Council...can offer no very cheerful picture of the state of the British Film Industry. Production has continued to decline; unemployment remains acute. This is not entirely the fault of the industry itself; the chilling wind blows neither from Elstree nor from Hollywood, but from Berchtesgaden ...
The Times, 25 July 1939

Introduction

During the 1930s there were many foreign-born film producers working in Britain. Sonck, like Ludwig Blattner¹ and Julius Hagen,² had been in Britain most of their lives. Blattner had risen from an assistant manager of the Winter Garden, New Brighton to establishing the Ludwig Blattner Picture Corporation in May 1928; Hagen had started out as an actor and, by 1929, had gravitated, via the renting of films, to become the owner of both Twickenham Film Studios and Twickenham Film Productions about the same time. Most however, came later, in the early 1930s, and

¹ Ludwig Blattner (1884-1935) controlled the non-American rights to the Keller-Dorian Lenthuir colour system to which Karl Freund had introduced him, and developed the Blattnerphone which incorporated the Stille sound recording system on wire. He failed to adapt to sound, was let down by backers, and his colour system was unsuccessful (although the BBC did utilise the Blattnerphone for speech). He sold his rights in the colour system to Technicolor in 1930 and committed suicide on 29 Oct. 1935. For a full description of the Blattnerphone see Edward Pawley, *BBC Engineering 1922-72*, London, 1972, pp. 178-183 and William Lafferty, 'The Blattnerphone: An Early Attempt to Introduce Magnetic Recording Into the Film Industry', *Cinema Journal* 22, No.4, Summer, 1983. In 1926, the financier Edward Beddington-Behrens who was trying to raise the funds to open a studio in Brighton was impressed by the Keller Dorian system and wanted Ivor Montagu to see it in Paris. 'Some of the things [Societe Film Keller-Dorian] have done are very beautiful.... Tell Gance about Brighton'; letter, Beddington-Behrens to Montagu, 15 March 1926, Ivor Montagu Collection.

² Julius Hagen, (r.n. Julius Jacob Kleimenhagen), (1884-1940). *KW* attributed the collapse of his companies, not to a failure in production but to his venture into distribution and his expansion into two more studios.

included Richard Eichberg, Alexander Galperson¹, Isadore Goldschmidt, Julius Haimann, Marcel Hellman, Otto Klement, Alexander Korda, Steven Pallos, Gabriel Pascal, Eric Pommer, Arnold Pressburger, Victor Skutezky, Henry R. Sokal, Josef Somlo, Max Schach, Sam Spiegel, Günther von Stapenhorst, Count Ludovico Toeplitz de Grand Ry, and Friedrich Zelnik.

The 'internationalists', as Thorold Dickinson euphemistically calls them² are generically listed under a single name, Alexander Korda; Korda himself is considered to have initiated the boom of the mid-30s and precipitated the consequent slump. The names of foreign-born producers other than Korda rarely appear — these are the 'Korda Years' — and George Perry describes how the 'extravagant success of Alexander Korda's 1933 picture, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*,...set in train a period of excessive speculation with City firms almost falling over themselves in the rush to get a stake in the new booming business.'³ Quickly, the story reverses itself. Korda's losses and his too rapid expansion led his financial backer, the Prudential Insurance Company, to withdraw its support and take over the enormous studios he had built at Denham. 'The crash', writes the socialist film-maker Ralph Bond, 'did one good thing: it drove out many of the questionable characters who had infiltrated it.'⁴ These oversimplifications encourage the confusions which still surround an understanding of the period.

1 'Sasha' Galperson, as a director of *Two Cities*, introduced his friend, Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart to Del Giudice at a typical extravagant dinner party. Lockhart thought him a cynical exploiter of politicians, at his best in the election of 1945. Expecting Churchill to win he filled his house with 'the tough boys of the Tory party. Two weeks later they had been replaced by the Labour victors.' Hugh Gaitskell, also, considered him to have 'no morals whatsoever' and to be 'quite unsound from every point of view.' See Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *Friends, Foes and Foreigners*, London, 1957, pp. 176-7; Hugh Gaitskell, *The Diary*, pp. 176-177.

2 Thorold Dickinson, *A Discovery of Cinema*, London, 1971, p. 66.

3 George Perry, *The Great British Picture Show*, London 1974, p. 76.

Ernest Betts writes, similarly, in *The Film Business*, London, 1973, 'Production during the 1930s is largely identified with the work of Alexander Korda who may be said to have created or re-created the image of British films during that decade.'

4 Ralph Bond, 'Cinema in the Thirties', in Jon Clark et al., eds., *Culture and Crisis in the Thirties*, London, 1979, p. 224. Bond is being unfair and is exaggerating. As an active and influential member of the ACT, he is being consistent.

The 'film debacle' of the mid-30s cannot be fully understood if the scapegoat theory pertains and it is seen simply as the consequence of the opportunism of individual foreign producers, the most important of whom, in this connection, are Alexander Korda and Max Schach. All the significant production companies of the period, not only those controlled by foreign-born producers, namely London Film Productions and the Capitol Film Corporation, attempted to find ways to break into the American market, often straining their financial resources to breaking point. Gaumont-British, for example, remade Kurt Bernhardt's German and French bi-lingual, *The Tunnel* (1935, dir. Maurice Elvey), as an 'answer to *Things to Come*', purchasing shots from the German version. Sidney Gilliat, who was originally assigned to write the script, found it a completely 'irrational and impractical' project and his enormous treatment 'in the spirit of Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou' was abandoned in favour of a 'more realistic tale, about the emotional and practical crises faced by the tunnel constructor.'¹ The film finally cost 'the then staggering £200 000'². Not only was it the most expensive film made by the company, but it 'also exhibited most of the worse features resulting from the policy of making high cost films aimed at the American market.'³ It was a fiasco to match anything which was happening elsewhere in the industry.

Rachael Low writes that 'Despite a persistent drain to Hollywood there has *never been* (my ital.) a shortage of film-making talent in Britain. It is production finance that has been hard to find.'⁴ The history of the 1930s and 1940s shows that this seeming half-truth is not true at all. Working capital was often short or non-existent for British industry as a whole, but when it was made available, as it was in the 1930s, success in the film industry did not necessarily follow. British talent also was in short supply, and there was no drain of British technicians, or directors to Hollywood. Britain's poor showing in the film business reflected the general malaise of British industry as a

1 Geoff Brown, *Lauder and Gilliat*, London, 1977

2 Linda Wood, ed., *Maurice Elvey, A Case Study*, London, 1987, p. 22.

3 Ibid.

4 Low, op. cit., p. xiv.

whole, along with poor management procedures and generally inadequate or non-existent industrial relations.

Government to the Rescue?

During the so called 'Westminster Bank Case' in 1939, when the bank attempted to recover its advances to the Capitol Film Corporation Ltd. from its guarantors, a number of insurance companies, Sir Stafford Cripps described the method of borrowing and underwriting for film production of the mid-1930s as having been established with 'the express approval of the Board of Trade as a good way of financing British film production.'¹ It was a system expressly designed for producers like Max Schach, the company's Managing Director, without money of their own.

Korda borrowed more directly, from the insurance company itself and Ian Dalrymple has gone as far as to suggest that a 'Tory-dominated National Government brought pressure to bear on the Prudential to make a substantial contribution towards the expansion of British film production.'² We have seen also that there has been much speculation about Korda's involvement with British Intelligence throughout the 1930s and 1940s and suggestions that the Prudential's interest in the film industry was inspired by Claude Dansey's links with it. E.H. Lever, joint secretary of the Prudential, was to comment that although its initial investment in London Films was 'to some extent accidental, subsequent increases were the result of deliberate decisions since...the investment not only provided a suitable outlet for funds but was a matter of national importance.'³ Hence a set of vague terms, 'national importance', 'government pressure', 'express approval of the Board of Trade', and Korda's opportunism come together to give the impression that there was co-ordinated political activity which 'inspired' the boom of the mid-1930s.

¹ *KW*, 11 May 1939; *The Times* and *FT*, 29 May 1939, give a detailed reports of the Westminster Bank action.

² Ian Dalrymple, 'Alex', *Journal of the BFA*, London, Spring, 1956.

³ Street, 'Alexander Korda', loc. cit., p. 164.

The truth, however, may not be quite so sensational; certainly it would not explain the interest of the numerous other insurance companies and banks who rushed to support the film industry in the mid-1930s. Documentation in the files of Equity and Law Life and the Commercial Union throw more light on the investment of the insurance companies.

A report to the Commercial Union in August 1935 suggests that opportunities for investment were being overlooked:

During the last few years the development of the film industry in this country has been almost staggering in its magnitude. This has probably been brought about by the action of the Government in the first instance through their introduction of the Quota System as applied to films produced in America.¹

This puts a very different perspective on the involvement of Government and means simply that the insurance companies saw investment opportunities as a *consequence* of the Films Act of 1928 and that they saw 'national interest' as synonymous with 'commercial interest'. The report continues, in a remarkably similar vein to that of Lever. 'The first time we became interested in this special form of insurance was in July 1933, but in the first case we confined our interest to a guarantee of the solvency of Paramount Films Ltd.' About a year later the Commercial Union decided to 'interest itself in a more complicated contract'. Essentially, the distributor, confident

that a certain type of picture would make an appeal...seeks out the services of a Producer.... In considering a film guarantee, therefore, the reputation of the Distributing Company is of consequence...[for] where a picture has been produced for the account of a reputable distributing house *it is very seldom that any picture fails to earn gross receipts sufficient to pay the full production costs*

It was still necessary for the Production company to finance the film and, the report continues, banks, notably Westminster and Lloyds, had been willing to advance funds, subject to the lodging of a Bond 'by a reputable Insurance Company,

¹ Report to the Commercial Union, 6 Aug. 1935. In a cynical conclusion it notes that in 'addition to the premiums we have received in respect of the Film Guarantees, the acceptance of the business has been the means of enabling us to secure Life Assurance to the extent of £55,000 Sums assured, the premiums in respect thereof amounting to £347.'

guaranteeing the repayment of any Loan.... The pioneers in connection with this class of business were Messrs. Glanvill Enthoven & Co.' Heading the list of companies 'who in addition to ourselves are known to have taken a share of this business' was the Prudential, the company which, by the end of the following year, had invested close to £2 million in LFP. Heavy borrowing, therefore, was already well advanced. Only one was for a film from Max Schach's Capitol Films.¹

The Interdependence of Film Companies

The financial crisis which affected Capitol and had brought down Twickenham also affected LFP. Low blames Schach for precipitating it but, as we shall see, the evidence leads towards a different conclusion. A view of events solely as a history of individuals overlooks the greater forces which were at work. Schach was financially incompetent, but all the major film companies lost money, including Korda's London Films. Korda 'would make a wonderful Prime Minister of Hungary, Churchill is reputed to have said, 'provided he had a Rockefeller as his Finance Minister.'² As Street aptly puts it, in 'the final analysis Korda's achievements as a producer probably outweigh his financial ineptitude, but only just.'³ The Capitol scandal, was certainly an example of financial mismanagement, but was more to the discredit of the City of London than it was to the film industry.

The story of Max Schach's British adventure emerges from the trade papers and the Law Reports of the time. The Westminster Bank, which had been one of the organisations lending money to the film industry and to Schach's companies among others, went to court to recover the unpaid part of its loans from the underwriters. As the case was settled out of court within a week, details of the settlement are not known, but enough was said of Schach's mishandling of company finance to completely destroy any remaining reputation people may have entertained. We do not know how well Korda would have survived such

¹ These were partial guarantees for Denham Productions, Stafford Productions, British and Continental Productions and Phoenix Films, among others.

² Quoted in H. Montgomery Hyde, 'Personal Reminiscences of Alexander Korda', *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, Autumn, 1969, p. 186.

³ Street, loc. cit., p. 177.

contemporary scrutiny had LFP's borrowing been from a bank and not from the Prudential Assurance company itself.

Low remarks on Schach's 'showy' associates, his preference for working with visiting European and Hollywood stars and top technicians as well as his failure to invest in the superstructure of the British film industry, whilst overlooking that Korda's expansion at Denham not only involved borrowing on a much larger scale but entailed, in its conception, that independent peripatetic producers like Schach, would actually utilise its infrastructure. 'Denham was a Moloch — it had to be fed', wrote Paul Tabori¹ and, indeed, *Love from a Stranger*, a Trafalgar film, had given it sustenance. Toeplitz Productions, Franco-London Films, City Film Corporation, Soskin Productions, Hammer Productions, Criterion Film Productions and others also borrowed from the same source, often making films in exactly the same circumstances as Schach and operating as tenant companies. The premiss on which the studios were built was that its stages and offices would be hired by others and Korda's prosperity depended on a thriving non-studio owning industry which hired the studios at Denham. Hence Schach's and Korda's fortunes were intertwined in a complex capitalist speculation. Low therefore misrepresents the independence with which Korda and Schach were able to operate. Korda was dependent on there being a continual flow of funds from the independent production companies.

With a much more satisfactory distribution arrangement in the USA than Schach, Korda could squander money too, although the story still remains incomplete. An 'informant' to the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent Cyril Ray wrote, with obvious reference to Korda, that for 'one of the typical £100 000 monstrosities that aim for the United States and miss it you should add a good deal more for cast, quite a bit for story, a good deal for sets and film stock, mismanagement, lunches, cigars, delays, rake offs and the usual nonsense.'² Schach paid Bergner and Czinner together £30 000 for their work on *Dreaming Lips*,³ a figure

¹ Tabori, op. cit., p. 183.

² Cyril Ray, *MG*, 22 Jan. 1938, pp. 11-12. This feature gives a breakdown of the budget on a 'quota quickie' and touches upon 'Extravagant Methods', comparing the cost of British productions with the quoted costs of some American features.

³ Low, op cit, p. 203, writes that Tauber received £60 000, but £40 000 is the figure given at the Westminster Bank hearing in 1939. Bergner's fee has been misunderstood. At the hearing, it was

significantly less than Bergner, alone, had been paid by Korda for starring in *The Rise of Catherine the Great*, which cost £100 000.¹ Marlene Dietrich received £80 000 from Korda to be directed by Jacques Feyder in *Knight Without Armour* (1937), a film which finally cost £350 000 and did poorly; his adaptation of H.G. Wells's *The Shape of Things to Come* in 1936, which cost nearly as much, also failed disastrously.² Sarah Street argues, that Korda's known mismanagement of London Films proved, to be a factor in dissuading the Bank of England from supporting the idea of a Film Bank in 1937.³

Mystery Financiers

Documents at the Commercial Union reveal that Low's analysis of the crisis in the film industry of the late 1930s is too narrow and too limited. A report dated 6 May 1935 outlines the advantages for the company were it to invest in the film industry

The regulations governing the Quota System laid down that before a picture produced in America could be shown here, the American Producers must arrange to produce a specified number of pictures in this country. Large American Distributing Companies, therefore, such as Paramount Films, for example, found it necessary to arrange for the production of the requisite number of Quota pictures to be made here, so that they could obtain an entre (sic) for their major productions shot in Hollywood.... An important consequence of the Quota system was the fact that it encouraged the production of pictures in this country on a larger scale...and...this country is attracting some of the finest Producers in the world.... An outstanding example of this can be found in the engagement of the world famous producer, Alexander Korda, whose name is associated with such well known films as *Henry the Eighth*, *Catherine the Great*, and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*.

mentioned that she and Czinner received £60 000. Writers have taken this to be her fee for one film when, in fact, Equity and Law Life Assurance documentation makes it clear that it was not the case. Czinner and Bergner were to be paid a joint fee of £50 000 for a second film for Capitol. They received a £20 000 advance. In all likelihood, their joint fee for *Dreaming Lips* was £40 000. Hence Sir Stafford Cripps's mention of £60 000. £40 000 was no more than Dean was paying Gracie Fields. £18 000 was apparently paid for the rights to *Pagliacci*; see *Picturegoer*, 2 Jan. 1937. As a comparison the rights to the play, *Clive of India* cost £7 500.

1 *The Times*, 17 April 1937. For LFP figures, Street quotes from documentation at the Prudential Assurance; they are likely to be fairly accurate, but they are not actual figures and differ in specific cases from the actual budget figures in the Cunynghame Collection. According to Tabori, *Catherine* grossed £350 000 on its first release.

2 Street, quotes a much lower figure, £241 028 with receipts of less than half from the British and overseas market combined. The choice therefore is between failing 'badly' or 'disastrously'.

3 Street, loc. cit., p. 162. Similarly, 'LFP's financial fortunes played a key role in influencing the attitude of British bankers towards investment in the movies.' loc. cit.

The references to Paramount and to Korda make it clear that the writer had been impressed by Korda's apparent credentials and influenced by his apparent success on the international market. Korda 'is the principal Producer engaged by... "London Films Ltd.", and in which... the "Prudential" have a large financial stake.' There were other companies, 'in addition to ourselves... [who] have taken a share of the business.'¹ It seemed short sighted to be left out. The Commercial Union had shown an interest 'in this special form of Insurance' as early as July 1933, although this had been 'a guarantee of solvency.' A year later its interest had swollen to 'guaranteeing the bank in respect of advances' to film production companies.

The pioneers in connection with 'this class of business', were the brokers, Glanvill Enthoven and Co. and C. T. Bowring and Co.; the latter, as we have seen, had already been associated with Korda. Three years later, when the insurance companies found themselves threatened with having to meet the debts of the film companies, Glanvill Enthoven was seen as something of a villain. At this point, however, its enterprise was admired. The film production companies themselves had to provide a proportion of the budget and the brokers had a lien on all income until the loan was repaid to the bank. The report was full of optimism. It 'is generally agreed that the Distributor shall pay a certain proportion of the production cost immediately the Film is delivered... and accepted.' Hence 'a large part of the loan is automatically wiped out.' It was straight forward; there were no foreseeable difficulties.² During the years 1934, 1935 and 1936 'business to the extent of something like

£4 000 000 was placed on the Insurance Market through Glanvill Enthoven and Co.'s account,' of which about 35 %t was related to the Capitol Group, but, as we have seen there were other sources of finance.

1 These included London, Motor Union, Royal Exchange, Northern, World Auxiliary, Union of Canton, British Oak.

2 At this point, it had guaranteed loans to fourteen companies. Capitol Films was only one of them.

The producing companies, observed Sir Stafford Cripps representing the Bank in court, had been 'founded...to utilise the producing capacity of a certain Mr. Schach...who was said to have very high qualities as a producer'.¹ Initially, CFP Ltd. had approached Glanvill, Enthoven and Co. to raise the small sum of £12 500 and Glanvill obtained guarantees from the marine underwriting market. Mr. Austin of Glanvill, Enthoven took L.A. Neal of Capitol to Westminster Bank in August 1934² to raise the sum (which was later raised to £15 000), on the basis of the guarantee, for the production of *Abdul the Damned*, which was to be co-produced with BIP on a 50:50 basis and budgeted at £50 000.³

C F P was soon under the umbrella company Capitol Film Corporation. More money was raised in the same way and enabled it to move into larger offices. ⁴The Corporation opened production offices at Denham Film Studios as well and clearly saw itself as developing within the existing framework which Korda was providing. Soon other companies were floated, each one with a specific function, financed by 'mystery financiers,' as *Kine* called them.⁵ In fact the money was being found in the same way as the initial £12 500, but Capitol now had a separate distribution arrangement for one of its companies, Buckingham with GFD, which advanced it 37 1 2 % of its production costs.

The Capitol companies were not the only ones who were borrowing with the help of the insurance companies. During March 1936 alone, some of the production

1 They were Capitol Film Productions, Cecil Films, Trafalgar Films.(originally called Denham Films) and later Tower Films]

2 This is eleven months before the Aldgate Trustees, set up specifically for this purpose, were registered. Low attributes much of the blame to them, but they were established only in July 1935, when matters were well under way. Significantly, their directors were H. Wilkins and F.C. Ellis, both of Glanvill, Enthoven and Co. and the accountant S. Bayliss Smith.

3 Presumably, the extra £10 000 was advanced by the distributors, Wardour Films, which was, like BIP, a John Maxwell company.

4 At 293 Regent Street. It had previously been at 199 Wardour Street. CFC Ltd. Co. Reg No. 304532. Nominal capital £125 000 in 5s. shares. Directors qualifications £100 each. Remuneration of £200 per annum, £250 for Chairman.

5 *KW*, 5 Sept. 1935. Buckingham Film Productions, for example, was established to make films for GFD.

companies involved were: Toeplitz Productions (two films), Soskin Productions, Hammer Productions, and John Stafford Productions (five films).¹

When Westminster Bank totted up its loans to various film companies, it had not only lent money to the Capitol group but also to a dozen or so others.² Furthermore, it was far from the only source of working capital and there is no indication that Schach or the Capitol companies were responsible, by themselves, for the burst of enthusiasm which was being felt by investment companies.³ The development was seen to be a result of Quota legislation.

The Collapse of CFC

John Stevenson and Chris Cook point to a paradox which lay at the heart of Britain in the thirties, 'where new levels of prosperity contrasted with the intractable problems of mass unemployment and the depressed areas.'⁴ They note that from 'the middle of 1933 the economy began to revive on an up-swing which was partially checked in 1937, but continued with rearmament in 1938-9....'⁵

The period of Schach's activity and the peak of Korda's work in the 1930s coincide then with a rising investment curve with speculators looking for opportunities in the

1 *KW*, 9 April 1936. Other were London Screens Ltd., Franco-London Ltd., and T.A Welsh Productions Ltd.

2 Aide memoir, 20 July 1937. The companies were: The Capitol companies (Capitol, Cecil, Trafalgar), City, Criterion, Embassy, Grosvenor, New Ideal, Producers' Distributing Company, Phoenix, Premier Stafford Productions, Soskin Productions, John Stafford Productions, Transatlantic Talking Pictures, Herbert Wilcox Productions, Beaumont, London and Continental Pictures. The Films Council report in *WFN*, Jan. 1937, mentions other companies with charges: Atlantic Film Productions had charges of £58 750. to Aldgate Trustees, Victor Saville Productions had charges of £320 000 in favour of Denham Securities Ltd.

3 Commercial Union Report, 6 Aug. 1935. The other companies were: Prudential, London, Motor Union, Royal Exchange, Northern, World Auxiliary, Union of Canton, British Oak, 'as well as a number of less known Companies and Syndicates'. It noted that Westminster and Lloyds were the two banks concerned. Commercial Union had also 'guaranteed sums to Stafford Productions [for three films], British and Continental, Phoenix Films [for *Death at Broadcasting House* and one other] Capitol [for *Abdul the Damned*], and some other companies.'

4 John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *The Slump*, London 1979, p. 5.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

open market. By 13 February 1936, the initial application for loans to Trafalgar Films amounted to £936 000, one of the films being *Elizabeth of England*.¹ After May 1936, a further £600 000 was advanced, without any investigation by accountants, in order to save the group but matters had gone too far. With the size of the loans mounting, Glanvill's had asked that Bayliss Smith join the boards of two of the Capitol companies, 'to watch their interests' and he had agreed subject to being allowed to investigate them. His report, read on 16 July 1936, revealed financial irregularities throughout the whole group.² The cat was out of the bag. There had been doubts about easy money, at least since September 1935, when John Maxwell warned about over-hasty investment in the industry.³ Mark Ostrer too had expressed his concern that the flow of finance was leading to inflationary production costs and more failures for the industry.⁴ In January 1937, the Films Council described the 'present meteoric expansion of the British film trade' as constituting 'one of the most dangerous and highly speculative booms in the history of finance.'⁵ It outlined how UA had grasped the opportunity to involve itself with 'an English quality producer,' Alexander Korda, and in one swoop seen a way to meet its 'Quota

1 Trafalgar's directors were H.A. Proctor, MP, A. Beverley Baxter, MP, Mr. L. A. Neal, Max Schach and S. Bayliss Smith, who joined the Board of Buckingham, another of the Capitol companies but not cited here, in May 1936 to represent the interest of the underwriters. Proctor, Baxter, Neal and Schach formed the board of the other Capitol companies.

2 *The Times*, 5 May 1939. Bayliss Smith was also a director of the Aldgate Trustees, who were set up by Glanvill's to find the necessary underwriters for the loans

3 The Manager of the Charing Cross Branch of the Westminster Bank notified Head Office in a letter dated 19 Dec. 1935, that he had 'given particular consideration to the activities of this Company [Capitol] in as much that he gathers from trade journals and their accounts that they appear to be spending money well ahead of their current production.' As the loans were guaranteed, he was not unduly worried.

4 *KW*, 6 Feb. 1936. At an ordinary General Meeting of Gainsborough Pictures (1928) Ltd. held on 31 Jan. 1936. Low seems to think that this was an oblique reference to Capitol's activities, but it was obviously a reference to the general sprouting of film companies which were entirely living off borrowed money; Maxwell's earlier comment at the ABPC AGM, on 28 Aug. 1935, noted the great and unusual flow of money into film production, 'British film production seems to be looked upon as a sort of new Klondyke...large sums of money are being spent extravagantly and wastefully. I know of large sums of money advance on pictures having been lost....', *KW*, 5 Sept. 1935. The Capitol affair had not yet shown up.

5 *WFN*, Jan. 1937.

obligations', get 'good films instead of quickies,' and make money on the home and foreign markets. Once more the analysis points to the financial opportunities being seen and exploited by the investors themselves. 'The writer of the article' commented

Kine

traces the inception of the boom from the passing of the Quota Act ten years ago, which caused millions of money to be poured into British production. That stream has rapidly increased, so that in the first ten months of 1936 loans of nearly £13,000,000 were forthcoming from banks, insurance companies, investment trusts and private individuals for the financing of producing, renting and exhibiting concerns...few British production companies have paid any dividends for the last four years.¹

The Economist was incredulous

We find it hard to believe, as headlines in the popular Press during recent weeks have suggested, that the joint stock banks, insurance companies and groups of Lloyd's underwriters have abandoned their traditional caution and lost "millions,"... So far as is known, the banks have advanced no money...except against a Lloyd's guarantee. The underwriters accepting these lines have limited their policies to amounts which under the terms of contracts between the producer and a recognised distributor, will be paid when the film is delivered.²

It nevertheless recognised that there had been losses, due, in its view, to budgets being exceeded. 'Additional finance therefore becomes necessary for a picture whose intrinsic value has not increased.'³ There had also been hints in the City that all was not well. When Karl Grune planned to go and work as a miner in a Northern coal town to acclimatise for the production of *The Stars Look Down*, *Kine* turned it into cautionary tale. Older 'members of the Trade' it thought would be reminded of the story of 'the film financier who, some years ago, joined a troupe of jugglers to prepare himself for a financial career. The financier knew so many juggling tricks that he soon put the juggler out of business, and later his spectacular juggling with shares put the financial juggler in jug.'⁴

¹ *KW*, 7 Jan. 1937.

² *The Economist*, 23 Jan. 1937.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *KW*, 8 April 1937.

Schach and his colleagues blithely continued to assuage the anxieties of the underwriters, but, as concern fuelled by press speculation continued to grow. Glanvill Enthoven, commissioned a further report on Trafalgar from Bayliss Smith's company, Causleton and Elliot, which was completed on 31 March 1937, and, because of the interlacing of finances, referred to the operation of the group as a whole. It was, the insurance companies were to claim, truthfully but disingenuously, 'the first time information was given to the interested Insurance Companies by Messrs. Glanvill Enthoven & Co. that difficulties had arisen.'¹ Once more, Bayliss Smith questioned the 'technical ability' of Schach, saw evidence of poor organisation, described the books as being in a state of confusion, and noted the lack of control over finance.

The Investigation Committee

The following day, April 1, 1937 a committee was set up by the underwriters to prevent the Capitol Group going into liquidation and a further £130 000 was borrowed from the bank which, at the same time, agreed to reduce its interest rate from 4 1/2 to 3 %, believing that its security was safe. It attributed the 'cause of the debacle' to the 'incapacity' of the directors of the the companies, namely Schach and his colleagues, the 'prodigal waste of money in production,' the transference of money from one film budget to another, which had enabled some of the companies to survive a little longer but had brought them all crashing down together, and the fact that 'the distributors were more interested in American products.' The committee was, of course, diverting responsibility from the insurance companies themselves and was considering only the disaster of CFC, not that of the industry as a whole. By considering it in isolation, they

¹ Report to the Commercial Union, n.d. The underwriters, certainly, had known about inter-company loans since July 1936. 'At that date Mr. Austin of Glanvill's clearly knew all about it,' see *The Times*, 4 May 1939. Whether this had been disclosed to the insurance companies is another matter.

failed to recognize that in planning its own investments the American market was not static and permanently depressed. Investment in its own film industry would have dire effects for film companies in Britain. As Linda Wood points out:

the large amounts of money made available to the independent producers during the boom years initially hid the fact that their base of operation was being eroded. The question of whether the films turned out well or badly made was irrelevant: the American market was closed to British films for strategic reasons which took no account of the merits of individual films. In the quest for the super profits of the international market, British producers undermined their own position by taking on huge debts which in the end they had no chance of repaying. Consequently when the crisis came, they fell harder and with greater ease than otherwise might have been the case.¹

In spite of a clear state of crisis Schach was still setting up companies however and registered Max Schach Productions on 29 April with £100 capital.² Transparently, Capitol had been in desperate need for more working capital since the beginning of 1937 for Equity and Law Life had 'considered a financial arrangement with C.F. Corp. Ltd in connection with studios at Elstree. The manager to arrange a report by a Mr. [Harold G.] Judd into the financial state and prospects of CFC Ltd.'³ Judd, a chartered accountant, who had been appointed by Equity and Law Life Assurance 'to watch over their interests' attended one of the regular meetings of all the underwriters on the 23 July 1937. His report three days later revealed that bank borrowing at 31 March 1937, stood at £1 395 467, with £72 000 in escrow. The Westminster Bank was not the only bank involved and

By means of the substantial reduction of the rate of interest by Westminster Bank Ltd., District Bank Ltd. and Chase National Bank Ltd., Interest charges have been very small and, in the case of the Westminster Bank Ltd., as a result of the reduction, there was created a Free Interest Reserve which has been utilised to the extent of £6,750....⁴

¹ Linda Wood, *British Films 1927-39*, London, 1986, p. 4.

² Korda launched Alexander Korda Productions, March 1939, with £530 000 capital; see KW, 23 March 1939. £330 000 was a loan from the Prudential Assurance Company. Wilcox, however, typically, launched Imperadio Pictures Ltd. in 18 May 1939, with a nominal capital of £100.

³ Minutes of Investment Committee, Equity and Law Life Assurance Society, 16 Feb. 1937. The report from Messrs. Mann Judd, Gordon and Co., stated 'that the books had not been balanced since the inception of the corporation and were in confusion. In April 1937, the books were still far behind and in a shocking muddle,' *The Times*, 6 May 6 1939.

⁴ Underwriters' Progress Report 31 March 1937 to 17 July 1937 on Capitol Group of Companies.

Although there was resistance to the company going into liquidation, the financial arrangements which were being made were designed to wind down the Capitol operation, whilst reducing the losses by settling with creditors at as low a figure as possible and simultaneously continuing to draw receipts from the distribution of films. The English version of *Mademoiselle Docteur* was being made possible 'by the finding of outside finance to the extent of £35 000, of which £18 000 has now been expended and of which the balance is due as to £10 000 on delivery of the first print and as to £7 000 on the delivery of the negative.'¹ Bookings through UA and GFD for already completed films were progressing and *Dishonour Bright* had received 1 171, whilst *Land Without Music* had received 999, but *Pagliacci* only 553. There was no pretence 'that the result of the exploitation of these films [*Jericho*, *Lilac Domino*, and *Mademoiselle Docteur*]' for which extra production money had being advanced by the Underwriters, 'will result in the recovery of the total amount spent.' It may well have been the case of throwing good money after bad.² The Underwriters were ruthless; 'The Directors [of CFC] a week ago were told they had to raise money or their personal guarantees would be called up.'³ Grune, who had been contracted for £10 000 to 'direct a picture', probably *The Stars Look Down*, 'verbally promised not to hold [the] Company to this contract.' Other creditors were simply beaten down.

The loans were renewed until October 1937 when one of the insurance companies took the view that the Westminster Bank had failed in its duty to monitor them and decided not to meet its guarantee. By January 1938, all the companies were taking the same position. In all, a total of £1 711 000 had been advanced to the Group and net losses stood at £689 000 in May 1939, a figure which it was still being reduced by

1 Ibid. The finance presumably came from Grafton Films who took production credit and also took over the film rights to *The Stars Look Down*.

2 The underwriters had advanced a further £127 000; GFD Ltd., had advanced £12 000 on *Jericho*; Film Producers Indemnity Policy had provided £11 000 on the *Lilac Domino*; £35 000 had 'been obtained from outside sources' for the making of the English version of *Mademoiselle Docteur*.

3 Notes of Meeting 23 July 1937. Presumably the personal guarantees were called up.

income from the films. As there was still money to be made, the companies were not liquidated. As late as 1941, CFC was still in the hands of the Receiver and earning.¹

Kine explained the situation:

Max Schach no longer holds the post of managing director of the organisation he founded, which is now virtually controlled by a representative of the financial interests concerned.

S. Bayliss Smith, F.C.A., of the firm Causleton Elliot and Co., chartered accountants, is now occupying the position of chairman of all the companies in the group.... Max Schach becomes an ordinary director. The business is now run jointly by Mr. Bayliss Smith and Mr. Schach... These developments have occurred...because of film losses which have made it impossible for the Capitol group to obtain adequate fresh finance for the time being.

This is still another echo of the bank-cum-underwriters guaranteed loans scheme last year, which eventually resulted in losses of something like £3,000,000 to the lenders.

Mr. Bayliss Smith is a director of Aldgate Trustees, Ltd ...

Capitol Film Corporation...has been able to raise money from a number of sources. At one time General Film Distributors was lending it 37.1/2 % of its actual production costs, while Equity and Law Life Assurance Society took up £160,000 of debentures and collateral on certain films and money in joint account of Capitol Films and money in joint account of Capitol Films and Aldgate Trustees, and also a further £60,000 for the associated company, Trafalgar Productions.

Not only that, it obtained in addition through Aldgate Trustees guaranteed overdrafts with the Westminster Bank of £450,000, £360,000, and £140,000 respectively, and with the District Bank £150,000.

Thus it has been able to raise no less than £1,260,000 compared with its own resources of £125,000.²

Not only had CFC handled money irregularly, placing it where it was most needed and not necessarily in the account for which it was allocated, but the Discovery of Documents during the legal action revealed that it had borrowed twice from the same source with alarming implications. The Slip, which formed the basis of the contract between the insurance companies and the Bank, noted that Capitol were required to put £50 000 into the Bank as security for the advance of £45 000 before the policies were made available to the Bank. In fact the producer's sum had been borrowed from Equity and Law Life Assurance Society and was paid back by the bank loan, which meant that 'The effect of the transaction...was that Underwriters were placed in the

¹ At 4 6 Throgmorton Avenue, London, EC2, the office of the Receiver.

² KW, 2 Dec.1937.

position of having provided their own collateral.so that...the prior provision of collateral...was not adhered to.’¹

Corporate Responsibility

As we have seen, the insurance investigation committee attributed blame for ‘the misuse of money provided’ to the CFC directors, but ‘Glanvill Enthoven and Co. had a definite measure’ of responsibility too, so much so that one of the insurance companies involved, Andrew Wier and Co. claimed a conspiracy between it, the bank, the film companies and two of their directors. The Notes on Discovery of Documents revealed a letter from the Manager of the Charing Cross Branch of Westminster Bank that it was ““in close contact with distributing companies”” and that in ““every case Messrs. Glanvills satisfied themselves that the advances should be repaid from distribution in the United Kingdom exclusive from sums to be derived of foreign and colonial rights.””² As late as 15 June 1936 Glanvill was satisfied with the financial position of CFC.³

Hence, the Westminster Bank Case was not the end of the matter and the effect of this ‘hot money’ episode reverberated for some years, ending in the kind of case which had been threatened all along, between the Sea Insurance Company Ltd. and Glanvill Enthoven, itself. At the end of 1943 it was settled out of court .⁴ ‘The business which gave rise to this and previous actions,’ *The Times* reported, ‘arose out of an attempt some years ago by British insurance to help the British film industry to

1 Report to the Commercial Union Part II.s.

2 Letter, 8 April 1935. It is clear from the document that Glanvill Enthoven and Co., were making the approaches.

3 Letter from Charing Cross Branch of Westminster Bank to Head Office. It was clear that CFC were in difficulties. Cheques were being issued prior to funds being available. Individuals, including Grune, lent sums of money for short terms.

4 *The Times*, 9 Dec.1943. ‘Later conditions...and the acceptance of similar risks might well have proved remunerative.’ *The Times* reported that approximately 50 % of the sum borrowed was lost, but this does not indicate whether interest is included in this percentage or at what rate.

establish itself.' It noted the 'risks which appealed to the underwriting instinct,' risks which 'were, and are still, accepted by the insurance industry.' No individuals are cited, there is no suggestion of mismanagement. Reflection had enabled it to see other forces at work, for then 'came the depression [and] underwriters incurred losses approximating to 50 % of the total involved.'

The situation, as far as the CFC is concerned, would probably have been successfully hidden had not the Insurance companies declined to cover its losses with the Westminster Bank. It should be remembered that the District Bank and Lloyds, at least, also lent money to film companies in the same way, but there were no court actions of this nature. It had not been the manner in which CFC operated, which brought the bank and the insurance companies into litigation, but the way in which the bank, the insurance companies and the trustees had operated their own businesses. Normal insurance conditions demanded complete disclosure of all relevant information at the time of the initial transaction of business. When it emerged that this had not happened, as far as Westminster Bank was concerned, the insurance companies decided not to cover CFC's losses. The net loss on CFC was estimated to be £689 000,¹ a revealing figure on two counts. Not only is it simply a proportion of the millions which have sometimes been mentioned, but also it is considerably less than 50 per cent of Capitol's borrowings. If the underwriters did lose 50 per cent of the sum involved in guarantees, they lost less on the Capitol account.

Bayliss Smith felt a rather distasteful regard for Schacht; at the point when he was representing the creditors in what Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart described in his diaries as 'some of the biggest cinema financial messes in this country', he noted that most

of this is lost by Jews — like Korda and Max Schacht [sic]. Latter already lost a packet for the German Government before Hitler. He has now done the same here. In Bayliss-Smith's opinion, and he would not say so lightly, Korda is a much worse man than Schacht. Schacht is just a slick Jew who sees financial moves ahead of the other fellow. Korda is a crook and, according to Bayliss-Smith, an evil man.²

¹ *FT*, 4 May 1939. The films were still earning to some extent, so the final loss is even less.

² Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *The Diaries*, London, 1973, p. 392. Lockhart's well known anti-Semitism did not prevent him exploring the possibilities of working for Korda after the war. He

Not everything about the film industry was unattractive to him however; according to Monja Danischewsky, he tried to go into production on his own account.¹

The Responsibility of Schach and Korda

Ernest Betts was correct in thinking that his employment at Capitol ‘was too good to be true.’ He found the work agreeable and ‘extraordinarily simple, for there was no scenario editing to be done.... For weeks at a time there would be great activity...dramatic meetings, arrivals and departures of actors, actresses, agents, directors, City men, and accountants.’² If *Abdul the Damned* had cost only £50 000, and could be counted a success due to its distribution through the Associated British chain, every subsequent film increased Capitol’s indebtedness. The films gradually became more expensive and more ill-judged. *Land Without Music* was projected to cost £70 000; it had been adapted for the screen by Rudolph Bernaur with a score by Oscar Straus who in 1908 had previously collaborated together on the operetta *Der Tapfere Soldat (The Chocolate Soldier)* in Vienna³. Ernest Betts and Eric Maschwitz, who, at the time, was Director of Variety at the BBC, provided additional dialogue, but it must have been a curious experience working with the exuberant, popular variety star Jimmy Durante, the opera star Richard Tauber, and Bernaur. *Pagliacci*, with two sequences in the ill-fated British Chemicolour, had a budget of £100 000.⁴ But rising production

eventually decided against becoming an adviser to Korda at £12 000 a year. ‘Films are unclean and having anything to do with them is moral and physical degradation’ he wrote to his son on 8 January, 1948, see *The Diaries*, Vol. II, London, 1980, p. 646. The position for Capitol at 17 July 1937 was that it was indebted to Westminster Bank for £1 395 467, against which there was held in escrow at the Banks £72,000. Templeton, who was representing the underwriters put the losses at between £1 500 000 and £2 000 000 for one broker alone.

1 Monja Danischewsky, interview with author, op. cit.

2 Betts, op. cit., pp. 7-14.

3 From G. B. Shaw’s *Arms and the Man*. Bernaur’s co-writer was Leopold Jacobson.

4 By the end of 1938, British Chemicolour, ‘invented’ by Otto Kanturek and Karl Grune, was in the hands of the receivers. William Fox had considered staging a come-back to the Industry with it, but it could not hope to compete with either Technicolor or Dufay-Chromex. In fact, British

costs were an endemic feature of all film production of the time. Not all of the films were artistic failures but Betts found *Love in Exile* (CFP 1936 dir. Alfred L. Werker), 'shocking' and *Jericho* (Buckingham 1937, dir. Thornton Freeland) which was made at Pinewood with Paul Robeson, 'a bad miscalculation'.¹

As we have seen, the conventional wisdom is that British films were being unjustly rejected by a cartel of American film distributors inclined to favour their own product, or products in which they had a financial stake. Not only was the market volatile, however, British films were rarely up to the standard of the best of those from America. The rare exceptions of success in American markets do not make a case, but had led producers and investors alike to think that there were easy pickings to be had. Wood is rather ambivalent about this; on the one hand she argues that 'many of the British films produced in the post *Henry VIII* boom...demonstrated a high level of technical competence'.² Alarming, she suggests *Spy of Napoleon* (Twickenham 1936, dir. Maurice Elvey) is among them, 'designed with the American market in mind,' a quality production which was 'well staged and carefully scripted. Sufficient studio time was allowed to end up with a finely crafted film.'³ On the other, she points out that it was not until well into the war that there was a recognition that 'films [for

Chemicolour, also known as Spectracolor (the system used for *Faust*, Publicity Picture Productions, dir. Albert Hopkins. 1936, with Anne Zeigler and Webster Booth), was not British at all, but an Agfa bi-pack film stock which had been launched in Germany in 1931 as Ufacolor and distributed abroad. It was considered unsatisfactory for features with an absence of pure white and green appearing as olive-brown, although modern prints suggest a distinct blue bias. One wonders how much confidence Grune and Kanturek had in it, for when *Pagliacci* was made the colour sequences — the Prologue and the final sequence — were also shot in black and white as back-up. See *KW*, 14 Jan. 1937 and 5 Jan. 1939; Gert Koshofer ed., *60 Years in motion pictures*, Antwerp, 1951; Adrian Cornwell-Clyne, *Colour Cinematography*, London, 1951, pp. 342-5. Cornwell-Clyne is complementary about Spectracolor.

1 Freeland, American born, worked almost totally in Britain from 1935 until his retirement in 1949. Werker, also American, made only this one film in Britain. Mainly a formula director his most interesting film in this connection is *The House of Rothchild* (1934).

2 Linda, Wood, ed., *Maurice Elvey, A Case Study*, op cit., p. 24.

3 Ibid., p. 24. *Spy of Napoleon* is appalling by any standards and Wood, by trying to inflate its qualities falls into the same error as those producers of the 1930s who believed that there was nothing wrong with British films. It apparently cost £45 449 to produce.

the American market] must be made to a technical standard at least equivalent to that of the home market aimed for [and] quite generous budgets became available.’¹

It was not only the highly speculative companies like CFC and LFP which were hit. “‘Cease work” Ordered at Big British Studio’ announced the front page of the *Daily Express* on 24 February 1937 in a reference to the Gaumont-British studio at Shepherd’s Bush.² It was ‘the biggest blow yet taken by British films,’ the effect of which ‘is likely to shake the whole industry.’ It had fared no better, and for very much the same reasons, than those companies which everyone knew had been mismanaged. When Schach had negotiated a separate distribution arrangement with Murray Silverstone in February 1936, UA was still desperately in need of films.³ Schach created Trafalgar Film Productions and all looked well. British-financed films, not just Korda’s films, would, at last break through into American markets.⁴ The films were to be made at Denham, something which no doubt suited UA who were interested in Korda’s solvency⁵ but, for Trafalgar and the Capitol Group as a whole, this was not as satisfactory a situation as it appears on the surface, for a little later the situation had changed.⁶ Korda had UA to help him with regard to the American market; Capitol’s financial support came only from GFD and its usual sources, namely the bank. With no financial involvement, UA felt no commitment to showing the films unless they were specially needed or otherwise exceptional. CFC was experiencing the time-honoured difficulties of distribution in the American market which all British

1 Ibid., p. 26.

2 Work was to stop on 12 March 1937. 600 studio workers ‘will have to look for other jobs’; it blamed the American market for not buying. Successes did not pay for losses ‘on other productions equally costly.’

3 According to Notes on Discovery of Documents, CFC had contracted for ‘six pictures at a minimum cost of £86 666 each.’ The films, according to the Notes, were to be made under Schach’s supervision, to be directed by Grune, Bing Howard, and René Clair, and to be able to make full call on LFP’s facilities and contract artists.

4 Trafalgar Films Productions Ltd. Co Reg. No. 309083. with a capital of £25 000.

5 *KW*, 6 Feb. 1936.

6 Buckingham Film Productions was formed a month later with Hermann Fellner and a capital of £25 000. Cecil Films Ltd., Co Reg. No. 178318, followed.

companies faced, but it had the additional difficulty in that its films had not been created with the American market in mind.

As we have seen, it is not the case that Schach and Korda were the only figures who were spending other people's money. The film industry, as a whole, was doing it; Herbert Wilcox is a good example; Hagen and others had gone into liquidation. The Hungarian-born, Gabriel Pascal, the most profligate personality in the history of British cinema, who had once been an actor and began in the cinema by exporting films from Germany, had struggled in Britain until falling on his feet by persuading George Bernard Shaw to allow him to have the rights to produce his plays for the screen. He had no money, according to legend only half-a-crown, when the arrangement was struck. His budgets and extravagance grew, although never with his own money. *Major Barbara*, budgeted for £130 000, had finally cost Rank who bailed it out a further £100 000, virtually the same as the Czinner/Bergner *Dreaming Lips* (Trafalgar 1937) for Schach.¹ *Caesar and Cleopatra*, grew out of hand and brought Pascal's downfall. Budgeted at £250 000, it had 'cost approximately £1 278 000, not counting the cost of Technicolor prints.'²

Schach and Korda, later Pascal and Del Giudice³, extravagant as they were, therefore, cannot be considered to have started any boom in the film industry. There

¹ *Daily Express*, 21 Nov. 1940. Apparently, Czinner's contract stipulated that Schach was to have no say in production matters and 'should not see any foot of the film made until the whole was finished.' It was delivered three days before its Royal première.

² Lord Grantley, *Silver Spoon*, ed. Mary and Alan Wood, London, 1954, p. 209; James Agate, *Around Cinemas*, London, 1948, p.262. Pascal first directed in Italy. He left Germany in 1933 for Hollywood but nothing happened and he came to England where, on 13 Dec. 1935, Shaw signed a contract for the filming of *Pygmalion*. Pascal Films was formed with the head of Pinewood, Richard Norton. *WFN*, Sept. 1936, noted cynically that he was spreading his interests and was a 'mixture of cleverness and swashbuckling, with a streak of fantasy ...'. Harold French argued with Pascal over the extravagance on *Major Barbara*, which he co-directed with David Lean. French would direct in the mornings, Lean in the afternoons, but Pascal would insist on more and more takes. Consequently, Pascal paid him to have his name taken off the picture; Harold French, interview with author, 20 Nov. 1989; S. N. Berhman, *The Suspended Drawing Room*, London, 1966, pp.72-73.

³ An Italian lawyer, he had been a member of the Christian Democratic Party and came to Britain in 1933, apparently for political reasons. Anti-Semitic legislation would have prevented him from practicing later and, indeed, *Two Cities* was banned from making a film in Italy as it

were other factors in play. Low accuses Schach and his associates of triggering ‘a speculative boom’ within a climate created by Korda’s ‘glamour and success’¹ but they did not go out to incite the insurance companies to guarantee and the banks to lend them money to finance their films. The insurance companies and the banks came to them. The Westminster Bank discovered that there were many other banks, seemingly more than willing to lend money to film production companies if it failed to do so and noted a string of insurance companies involved in the loans to the CFC alone.²

The financial details relating to the Capitol scandal were given newspaper coverage through the trade press and the courts; LFP received much less; the smaller companies received none at all. The documentation which Sarah Street has uncovered has made it clear that the Schach Korda comparison is by no means clear cut. She asks why it is that the Prudential tolerated ‘LFP’s mismanagement and indebtedness for so long’? She concludes that ‘Denham was the major reason. A large up-to-date studio operating at full capacity, using the latest techniques, experimenting with colour and at the centre of British film production was always an attractive and potentially lucrative proposition.’³ But it is the wrong question to be asking for Korda was less ‘tolerated’

had ‘a Jewish Board of management’, see *MG*, 8 Sept. 1938. After advising Ludovico Toeplitz, Korda’s old partner, on details of Italian law in the Bette Davis contract suit with Warner Bros., he and Toeplitz set up Two Cities Films Ltd., with £5 000 borrowed from Major A. M. Sassoon who became Chairman, and Colonel G. R. Crosfield. Mario Zampi, who had been living in Britain since 1924, was manager. Like Pascal, he moved from rags to riches and ‘possessed exactly £37. 10s’ on 3 Feb. 1942 ‘when he organized a party at Claridges which resulted in the formation of the the Cineguild unit’ of Anthony Havelock-Allen, David Lean and Ronald Neame.’ See John Barber, *Leader*, London, 9 Nov. 1946.

1 Low, op. cit., p. 199.

2 Aide memoir, op. cit. They included the Liverpool Marine and Century Insurance Co., Ltd., British General, the Switzerland General Insurance Co., a group under the leadership of Union of Canton, Guildhall, London, Northern, Union Insurance, Weirs, British Oak, Switzerland General, General Accident, Sea, Century, Indemnity Marine, Ralli, Triton, Commercial Union, English and American, World Auxiliary, Standard Marine, New Zealand, and Economic Equity and Law Life Assurance Society was also involved and had taken up £160 000 in debentures and collateral in certain films and in the joint bank account of CFC and the Aldgate Trustees.

3 Street, loc. cit., pp. 176-177.

than necessary for the speculative boom to take place. He was someone with the appropriate degree of showmanship to stimulate investment in the film industry. The documentation at the Commercial Union and Equity and Law Life shows that poor financial managers that they were, Schach and Korda were operating within a speculative climate in which they were as much victims as instigators. Korda's expanded operation at Denham was designed for producers like Schach to use in order to bring in revenue; in fact it could not operate without them. Not only were Schach's and Korda's operations interdependent, they met the demands of an already enthusiastic business community which was ready to invest in the film business. They were necessary components in a capitalist escapade and they were not alone; they were merely the most salient examples of entrepreneurial activity within the British Film Industry. 'The film industry' said the Labour MP George Strauss in the House of Commons 'has recently been the scene of a financial debauch which has not redounded to the credit of the City of London.' He referred to the 'incompetence and often dishonesty of the large financial interests.' Only 3 % of the companies which had been registered in the previous ten years were still in production.¹ The number of insurance companies involved in the action put it outside the realm of possibility that one or two individuals could have started the frantic desire to lend.² The financial chaos of the the film industry, therefore, needs to be seen as a feature of the management of western economies at the time, as one symptom of the wider financial mismanagement which had led to the 'Great Slump' and the the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the rise of Hitler in Germany.

1 Strauss was expelled from the Labour Party in March 1939 as a supporter of the Popular Front, but was readmitted the following year. He was PPS to Herbert Morrison and to Sir Stafford Cripps among other roles during the war. Created Baron Strauss, 1979.

2 The Westminster Bank issued 39 writs against two groups: the Liverpool and Marine and Century companies and Insurance companies under the leadership of the Union Insurance Society of Canton. Fourteen separate insurance companies were involved in this one action.

PART THREE

Protectionism and the Campaign Against Aliens: The Association of Cinematograph Technicians and the Ministry of Labour

A resolution requesting the Ministry of Labour to exercise stricter supervision of the granting of permits to aliens to work in this country was passed at a meeting of unions in the entertainment Industry held in London on Wednesday.... The resolution added: 'Owing to the political situation in Germany the unions are aware that many alien refugees are being offered employment in British film studios.... The unions view with alarm this influx of foreign competitive labour which is already displacing British labour and tending further to depress wages and conditions throughout the Industry.... The unions represented at the conference were the NATE, ETU, MU, and the Film Artistes' Association.
Kine, 11 May 1933, p.60.

In the House of Commons on November 21, the Home Secretary stated that, whilst as a sequel to recent events in Europe 11,000 German refugees had been settled in this country, 15,000 British workmen had been given employment as a direct result ...
Dorothy Frances Buxton, *The Economics of the Refugee Problem*, London, 1939, p.7.

Introduction

British films at the beginning of the 1930s were widely known to be unshowable abroad; many of them seem to have been unshowable in Britain. They were, when they were scripted at all, appallingly written; their directors had virtually no cinematic skills; their producers had no grasp of a popular medium.

As early as 1929, P. L. Mannock who was film critic of the *Daily Herald* and a regular contributor to *Kine* wrote:

Half the British directors who have made films this year ought never to be allowed in studios again. Half the studios should be scrapped forthwith, and half the heads of production firms should gracefully retire from a business to which their proved incompetence is a menace.... What is the use of pretending that [British films] are not below...standard? ¹

¹ *KW*, 3 Jan. 1929.

This was a theme to which he would constantly return. Mannock notes a film on which the photographer was not 'allowed to see a foot of his "takes" for nearly a month' and another on which the director 'could not see a foot of his work for six weeks.' He is critical of 'our starfinders', 'who take no notice of a cabaret dancer in the West End named Louise Brooks', an American dancer and actress who had been transformed into a star when she was featured in two films directed by G.W. Pabst in Germany, *Die Büchse der Pandora* (Pandora's Box) and *Das Tagebuch einer Verlorenen* (*Diary of a Lost Girl*) in 1928/29. Mannock's prescription was:

Import a foreign expert rather than a second rate Englishman, but make sure that the Englishman is given a chance to be first-rate.... Don't import any art directors; we have the best in the world.... Get the best photography at all costs. Elevate the story and scenario department by employing people with some grasp of polished popular entertainment, rather than precious young men of the Chelsea type....¹

A few months later in *Kine*, an anonymous 'Scenarist' wrote of a 'collection of old-fashioned hackneyed plots, poorly contrived, badly written, uninspired and dreary tripe' which passed for scenarios in Britain. He found it difficult to conceive that they were the best Britain could muster and blamed the producers, who knew no better.² Mannock was writing in a similar vein in the Spring of 1930. 'The average British scenario is a wretched business, usually an ill assorted compulsory collaboration...which is generally unworthy and frequently contemptible.'³ As late as 1939, the Executive Director of D. and P. Studios, Richard Norton, bemoaned the quality of British scenarios: 'Screenwriters are,' he emphasized, 'one of the most important things we must encourage in England.'⁴ It was little wonder that European technicians, European writers and producers were sought when

A company like Metro-Goldwyn or Paramount has something like sixty employees in its scenario department. We, if we are enterprising, have six.. One of our companies, in the first panic of retrenchment, decided to abolish its scenario

¹ Ibid.

² KW, 20 June 1929. The 'Scenarist' was, possibly, Mannock again, for he had written the scenarios for some silent films.

³ KW, 13 March 1930.

⁴ KW, 29 June 1939.

department altogether...Another scenario department was so loosely organised that an author in England was writing a second script whilst an entire unit was ignorantly shooting on a first script many hundreds of miles away. It is no unusual thing for costing £120, 000 to go on the floor with the script half-written, or for the script to be rewritten on the set before the day's shooting begins.¹

In 1933, when Joe May was driven out of Germany and came to England on his way to America he wrote of the humiliating conditions which existed in Germany under Hitler, but also emphasised the widely held belief in 'the lack of facilities and the unfavourable production methods prevailing in English studios.'² A well documented example from *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* (1935) demonstrates how justified such sentiments were. Based on a play from a Jerome K. Jerome story written at the turn of the century it never attempts to rise above a parable,³ but visually its director Berthold Viertel, was aspiring to a flowing camera technique similar to that in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* (US 1934) and was delighted to have 'young Curt Courant...one of the most brilliant creative photographers to graduate from the famous UFA studios.' There was to be only one location sequence, in Margate; the 'beauty of the play's message' could be affected 'by restrained and delicate use of symbolism in lighting and photography, allied with perfect characterisation.'⁴ But it wasn't straight forward and Gaumont-British wanted to hurry the film along. Ivor Montagu its associate producer noted, 'Apparently, a starting date had been given Viertel for Wednesday, 10 April, 1935, rather than the originally agreed 11th. April.' He felt 'that having regard to the character of the man, the effect to the picture of his feeling at ease, the accident that has strengthened his case for a time, it would in practice have better results for the picture to start Thursday.' Montagu was told that the Wednesday must be kept to and advised the director accordingly but Viertel who went over his head and 'applied to M(aurice) Ostrer and — without consultation with mee

1 C.A. Lejeune, *CT*, June-July 1937.

2 *KW*, 31, Aug. 1933.

3 It contains a characteristic snatch of 'émigré dialogue'. One of the boarding house lodgers makes a seemingly gratuitous comment to a Gypsy who looks in at the window, 'We don't encourage foreigners'. The line is absent from the story.

4 *FW*, 3 May 1935, p.17.

(sic) — was permitted to start Thursday.’ The original schedule of six weeks and four days was technically possible but, ‘having regard to the limitations (and qualities) of the director it was quite out of the question that, with this director, it would be done faster.’ The studio wanted to cut it by a week. Montagu thought ‘that, having regard to his character, better practical results could be obtained from placing before him a schedule which he thought practicable or attainable, than [by] putting him under the shadow of a schedule he knew quite well to be — for him at least — impracticable.’

It made no difference and Montagu found it an impossible situation. He was instructed to cut back and Viertel was complaining, but not to him. He was going over his head and Montagu felt it humiliating. Viertel ‘was working as hard as he possibly could’, and ‘work was proceeding at a normal rate’. Pressurizing him to reduce the number of shots ‘was quite impossible...because he is unable to visualise their unnecessaryness before he sees them on the screen’. Forcing ‘him into a discussion of them would, having regard to his character a) make him so nervous as undoubtedly to affect the quality of the picture b) not necessarily achieve the desired objective.’

Montagu was putting up the best case he could but his views were totally disregarded. Although they were both asking for the same things the company gave way to the director but not to Montagu. In every case ‘I have been placed in a false position to the director and made to appear as one who in servile enthusiasm to reduce the company’s expenses, urges him to impossible feats, the impossibility of which is admitted as soon as he discusses alone with the executive.’ How could he expect to keep Hitchcock in line when ‘the director had definitely been petted into feeling that he can rely on protection against me.’¹

¹ Letter from Montagu to Chan Balcon, 5 April 1935, Ivor Montagu Collection. According to Christopher Isherwood’s biographer, Brian Finney, Chan Balcon is the executive referred to in Isherwood’s *Christopher and His Kind*, p. 127, and disliked Viertel intensely, describing him as not ‘a Jew at all but one of these mongrel Ashkenazim, mixed-up scum from Poland or God knows where. The only real Jews were the Sepharadim, to whom the executive’s family belonged ...’. Montagu had first worked with Hitchcock and with Gaumont-British, when he re-titled and advised on *The Lodger*.

Eight years later the documentary film editor and director Jiri Weiss commented on the significant differences between British and Czechoslovakian film production. A feature film which would take six weeks in Britain would be made in as many days. There were low wages in Czechoslovakia but high standards, with the result that 'Czech cameraman became so famous throughout Europe, that sometimes three of them were working simultaneously in Britain.'¹ Other areas were just as heavily criticised. In 1931 Leslie Rowson spoke at the KRS:

In Hollywood, the usual procedure is to make photographic test of all costumes before starting the picture. In England...this would be very difficult as artistes are often engaged only the day before and the costumes chosen just before the scene is to be shot....[Mainly incandescent lighting is] used in American studios....The Mitchell [camera] reigns supreme, having built up an enviable reputation for ease of handling reliability and silence. Everything required by the operator is built into the camera....[Rowson] mentioned two filters used in California which are not generally known in England, the fog filter...and the neutral density filter....²

The American photographer Harry Stradling was to note³ '...a picture is put into production before the scenario is properly finished....It is obvious that an extra week or two spent in preparation when overhead costs are comparatively low is better than a week of revision during the course of production....British films need not suffer from their present standard of dialogue.' He complains of British actors who have no knowledge of cinema lighting technique. Even the British cameraman Henry Harris, was to note that 'In England, unfortunately, we are content to lag behind, giving with a few exceptions, only a mediocre imitation of American technique. Too often our British films are packed with...camera fireworks, such as freakish shots and all sorts of "intellectual" monstrosities, while entirely overlooking the [need] to arouse the emotions of the audience by the display of emotion on the screen.'⁴ When, in 1939,

1 Jiri Weiss, 'Film in Czechoslovakia' S&S, Spring 1943. Weiss left Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939 soon after the Nazis entered the country and came to London via Paris. He found work in the film department of the London Cooperative Society and Ralph Bond, Basil Wright, Edgar Anstey and Max Anderson gave him a helping hand by sponsoring him for ACT membership. After the war he became a feature director in Czechoslovakia.

2 KW, 26 March 1931.

3 CT, April-May 1937.

4 Ibid.

Otto Kanturek, in Hollywood, wrote an open letter to George Elvin, he admired the ‘easy expert organisation of the camera departments,’ which he found there, with uniform equipment and ‘the same cameras, mainly Mitchells, the same dolly trucks, and nearly always the same lenses.’¹ The standardisation, which he saw in Hollywood led, he argued, to greater collaboration and discussion amongst photographers and ‘is responsible for that smooth and even finish, characteristic of the best American production.’ The exchange of information on film stock, lamps, lenses, dollies, meant that there was a wide dissemination of information and understanding of new products throughout the industry ‘within three days’, a contrast with the ad hoc methods which British companies employed.

The major writers, photographers, producers, designers and even directors of feature films in Britain throughout most of the thirties were rarely British or, at least, were rarely British-born. They not only raised technical standards, they sometimes introduced them for the first time. The multi-lingual film, *City of Song*, for example, was much admired as a British film in 1931, L.C. Moen writing that there was ‘a profound lesson for the trade in it’. Other British studios, he argued, could do it, ‘given the will and the intelligence *at the top*....’² When in 1937, the producer Eric Pommer decided to direct *Vessel of Wrath* (Mayflower 1938), he did so less from choice than because ‘there was no first-rate (or even second-rate) director available.’³

The European film-maker during the 1930s and 1940s had come to Britain at different times and for different reasons. Alexander Korda, Friedrich Zelnik, Alexander Esway⁴ and many others, had already tried and failed to find success in Hollywood and taken to Britain instead. Mutz Greenbaum, ‘a cheerful “jokey”

¹ *CT*, Jan.-Feb., 1939.

² *KW*, 22 Jan. 1931.

³ *FW*, 3 Dec. 1939. The film was budgeted at £80 000. His direction is sometimes admired but Pommer was disappointed by it and John Grierson thought that Pommer ought to have known ‘better than anyone’ that a director/producer combination would not be successful. See *WFN*, April 1938.

⁴ See Rodney Ackland and Elspeth Grant, *The Celluloid Mistress*, London, p. 41-43, for an amusing, if incomplete, account of Esway’s career.

German'¹ Günther Krampf, and Alfred Junge had left Germany to take up contracts at British Studios at the point when sound was being brought into cinema.² After Hitler, things changed again; a number of film-makers came with contracts. Günther Stapenhorst, who, by 1934, was one of the few remaining producers in Germany, rejected a proposal from Goebbels to control the industry and, instead, leapt at the opportunity to produce films for Sir Oswald Stoll in London. He 'left Germany with a safe job in sight and a most decent salary,'³ although he achieved little in Britain. The remainder were driven out and some, the nationalistic and half Jewish film director Leo Lasko for example, found no work at all and disappeared from the industry. Although he had worked for Decla and UFA, he was unacceptable in Nazi Germany and untouchable in Britain.⁴ Korda declined to help him and, although he did a little editing, he soon vanished from the business. Arthur Lassally, an industrial film-maker found it impossible, in spite of three visits to Britain, to set up a company and was able to re-enter the film industry only in 1945.⁵ Max Mack, one of the great pioneers

1 Dean, op. cit. p. 184.

2 Krampf, possibly because of his difficulty with English, was critical of the excessive use of talk in British films. In his opinion, the 'story must be told by the picture and the atmosphere with which the cameraman has succeeded in investing in it.'; *WFN*, Feb. 1937. He was nostalgic for the days when the photographer 'was king of the studio.' He also liked ceilings which 'terrified' others, Edward Carrick, *Designing for Motion Pictures*, London, 1949, p. 45.

3 Letter, Margarita Stapenhorst to author, 30 Aug. 1987. Stapenhorst had insisted on salary conditions which he knew Goebbels would not meet. After Stoll he went on to work for Gaumont-British and LFP. A traditional conservative, he was sometimes seen as a nationalist and there were protests over *Das Flötenkonzert van Sannsouci* (1930).

4 Lasko had directed since 1921, films for Friedrich Zelnick, Decla, UFA, etc., some of them, like the two part *Der Weltkrieg* (1927-8) and his only sound-film *Scapa Flow* (1928), intensely nationalistic. His designer was sometimes Walter Röhrig, who had worked on *Caligari*, his photographer sometimes Fritz Amo Wagner, who had worked with Lang. His actors included Fritz Kampers, who became an 'Actor of the State' in 1939. From 1933-1936 Lasko, although officially barred from employment in the film industry, became a *Schwarzwerker*, writing scripts and scenarios using another writer, Fritz Köllner, as a front. The gap in his directing career when sound came in meant that he had no opportunity to adapt to it.

5 Arthur Lassally, father of the lighting cameraman, Walter Lassally, was born 19 Feb. 1892 in Berlin and entered films 1912, specialising in sport and technical subjects. A period in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1934 led to him trying to establish himself in Britain but it came to nothing as his financial resources were tied up in a trust fund in Germany and eventually became inaccessible. He, and his family came to Britain with help of Quakers, in 1939. He was

of German cinema, directed only one film in Britain and spent much of his time in the British Museum researching French-Boulevard-Comedies for use in amateur theatre¹. Even the much revered Carl Mayer, did little. He had accompanied Bergner and Czinner to Britain and often contributed to the latter's scenarios; Pascal always asked him to read his Shaw scripts. Paul Rotha, a good friend to many refugees, 'immediately placed him on permanent staff' to prevent his internment,² but only Del Giudice offered him substantial work — as a scenario editor from Oct. 1943-March 1944, for which he paid him over £2 000.³

Many came to Britain simply as a stage in the journey to America and remained because the contract from Hollywood did not arrive; others staggered through Austria and France before arriving in Britain as refugees, sometimes with no English, and no money. They had only one thing in common; they could not go back to Germany; from 1939, they could not return to other countries in Europe either. The majority had skills and talents which had been learnt, mostly in Germany, during the silent period, and were still very much in demand. Few of Britain's aspiring technicians could hold a candle to them; neither did it have many producers of consequence. The British technician was learning, in the poorest of circumstances, on the despised 'Quota' film; the industry's producers — with few exceptions — knew nothing about film-making

interned in 1940 and subsequently worked as a fireguard in the laundry of Hampton Court, before joining the War Office as a translator. Walter Lassally, interview with author, 28 May 1987.

1 *Be Careful Mr. Smith* (Union 1935). His book on film, written with E. A. Dupont et al, *Se zappe inde Leinwand?* was published as *With a Sigh and a Smile*, London, 1943.

2 Elizabeth Bergner, Interview, *Kino 11*, Summer 1983; Paul Rotha, 'Carl Mayer in England', July, 1980, Carl Mayer Archive; Gabriel Pascal, Paul Rotha, et al, *A Tribute to Carl Mayer 1894-1944*, London, 1947. Mayer had a number of unrealized projects including *She Stoops to Conquer* and an East End subject built round the Salvation Army. Rotha used him as Script Consultant for *The Times*, *The Fourth Estate* (his only credit in Britain), and for *World of Plenty*. Like many others, he had not adapted well to sound, but he was also ill and had spells in hospital. A medical report, 23 May 1944, Carl Mayer Archive, cruelly describes his condition. He died from cancer.

3 Letter, 17 Aug. 1944 from the accountants to Two Cities Films gives the titles as *Atlantic Forest* and *Pity the Poor Rich*, the latter remaining unfinished.; Paul Rotha, 'Carl Mayer in England', loc cit.

and there was no investment in studios, equipment, or training. Put simply, Britain was without an industry.

A glance at the 'Technical Section' of *Spotlight* for Winter 1935 reveals that no major British production company failed to have at least one European cinematographer under contract. Gaumont-British sported Mutz Greenbaum, London Films listed Georges Périnal and Hans Schneeberger¹. The small and under-financed company Criterion Film Productions, which had been created by Douglas Fairbanks Jnr., who had 'decided to dip [his] fingers in the production pie',² with the Rumanian producer Marcel Hellman, 'a round, bald headed man who knew the value of charm'³ but was 'completely devoid of taste'⁴, listed Günther Krampf. Criterion did not last long⁵ but among the other Europeans who worked for it were Sergei Nolbandov who was at this time its Production Manager⁶, the editor Conrad von Molo,⁷ and a reader, Ernst Borneman. Borneman found that his recommendations were totally ignored and divided his time acting as a chauffeur for Fairbanks, contributing to the newly created film journal *Sight and Sound* and writing, under a pseudonym, an extraordinary crime

1 Described as 'a real artist-technician — working in low light conditions', *Filmwoche*, 1939, nr. 30.

2 Brian Connell, *Knight Errant*, London, 1955, p. 78;

3 Harold French, *I thought I never Could*, London, 1973, pp.146-7. See also Rodney Ackland, *The Celluloid Mistress*, London 1954, pp. 163-4.

4 Harold French, interview with author, 20 Nov. 1989.

5 Registered June 1935. Its other directors were George Smith, Captain Cunningham-Reid and H.A. Hawes. Fairbanks, who was living extravagantly, had borrowed money from Irving Asher and repaid him by appearing in a Warner Bros. quota film, *Man of the Moment* (1935 dir. Monty Banks). Asher, at Murray Silverstone's request, asked Hellman to help him. By early 1937 Criterion was closing down. It lost two court cases over its first film, see above. A major factor was that Fairbanks who was courting Marlene Dietrich, decided to follow her when she returned to America. Paul Czinner was a director at one point but resigned in 1936.

6 Later, he wrote and produced at Ealing; during the war he monitored Russian broadcasts at the BBC and worked at the MoI where, in 1945, he was closely involved in its film on concentration camps, see INF 1/636; Elizabeth Sussex, 'The Fate of 3080', *S&S*, Spring, 1984, Dai Vaughan, *Portrait of an Invisible Man*, London, 1983.

7 Kurt von Molo, returned to Germany and edited newsreels during the war, in Berlin and in Rome. After the war, he directed.

novel *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*.¹ Even Basil Dean's Associated Talking Pictures, which was not associated with the employment of foreign technicians, lists 'the very technically minded' Jan Stallich², as its studio photographer alongside the relatively unimportant John W. Boyle. The only significant company not to list a European photographer was Herbert Wilcox's British and Dominion.

Of the British photographers listed in the same edition of *Spotlight* only four had notable careers: Freddie Young, Ronald Neame, Desmond Dickinson, and Erwin Hillier. Desmond Dickinson 'was so good', wrote Adrian Brunel, the director and writer, 'it seemed incredible that he should have been relegated to shooting cheap films only, while foreign cameramen, infinitely less talented, were freely admitted into the country to shoot in our studios.'³ Yet even Brunel found himself with divided loyalties. Dickinson was being shut out, but on another 'assignment...*The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel*...' there was 'an excellent producer...in the person of Arnold Pressburger' and much of its effectiveness was due to Lazare Meerson that genius amongst art-directors, as well as to the photography of "Mutz" Green (sic).⁴ Hillier, whose career had started as assistant to Fritz Arno Wagner on Fritz Lang's *M*, believed firmly in the training that studios offered. 'Most of us learnt to use arcs in

1 Cameron Mc Cabe, *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*, London, 1937. New edition, (with Afterword and interview with Borneman), 1986; 'Almost everybody had a living counterpart and was described as I saw him in the studio. Bloom's prototype...was Marcel Hellman' ..., p.270. See also Ernest Borneman, *Die Urszene*, Frankfurt am Main 1977. Articles include 'Sound Rhythm and the Film', *S&S*, Vol. 3 No. 10 (1934), which Paul Rotha translated into English. Borneman also acted as London correspondent to *FK*, a position he lost when he dictated a review of *Knight Without Armour* over the telephone to Berlin only to have it taken down as *Night Without Armour*. His job at Criterion had been found for him by his future wife, Eva Geisel, who was working as a secretary at Technicolor.

2 Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April, 1987. Stallich 'wouldn't tolerate people telling him how to film...he often made gadgets to help his filming.'

3 Adrian Brunel, *Nice Work*, London, 1949, p. 180.

4 Ibid. p. 181. Mutz Greenbaum, later Max Greene. Meerson is described by Léon Barsacq as one of the two greatest designers of European cinema, who 'was always very keen on detail, put most of his work into his sets whilst they were being built; he used plaster work very lavishly,' see Léon Barsacq, *Caligari's Cabinet*, rev. ed., NY, 1976, p. 90f. [Umberto Cavalcanti], 'Lazare Meerson', *S&S*, Summer, 1938, marvelled that a man trained originally as a painter should have caught so readily the architectural solution of so many problems of set-designing.' In 1936, at LFP, he was being paid £70 per week.

Germany, especially at UFA. My speciality was combining arcs which gave better contrasting shades with softer inkies [incandescent lamps].'¹

In spite of some early enthusiasms then, the so called 'aliens' were not universally welcomed and throughout the 1930s the Association of Cinematograph Technicians was at the centre of a campaign against their employment in the film industry. Over the years, in face of the 'alien' scare and widespread unemployment, writers, Patrick Mannoek for example, were to modify their views and become more sympathetic to the exclusion of foreigners. By 1935, he was writing of a 'racket' by which the Films Act was being by-passed. A film could not be registered as British unless the scenario was written by a British subject. Therefore 'the high powered imported writer' was credited with the 'screen play', 'treatment' or 'continuity'. The 'author of the scenario, as finally announced is British — but is often a dummy.'²

When a foreign cameraman's illness held up a British film last week, frantic telegrams were sent all over Europe for someone to replace him. Why? Are there no good British cameramen disengaged?...We are becoming altogether far too dependent on alien camera experts. The large salaries they are paid seem utterly disproportionate, and reliance on them, with all respect to their undoubted skill, is becoming something of a superstition.³

In spite of all the protestations of the union and the support it received in the press, the technical standards of British technicians were widely considered to be below par. In early 1937, ACT reprinted an article by the Hollywood Technicolor photographer Ray Rennahan,⁴ who had been lighting cameraman on *Wings of the Morning* (1936), the first Technicolor feature film to be produced in Britain. 'England's greatest lack', he wrote 'is in experience and trained technicians...minor technicians — property-men, electricians, and the like — have not had the years of production experience that have taught their fellows in Hollywood the importance of detail...."Grips" are virtually unknown in England, the property-man does most of the work done in

1 Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April 1987.

2 P. L. Mannoek, *KW*, 30 April 1936. He was specifically writing of American scenario writers, but it was also guarded reference to the émigré. Needless to say, there are no examples given.

3 *KW*, 25 March 1937.

4 *JACT*, Feb.-March 1937. Jack Cardiff was assistant.

America by our grip department.’ Even more significantly he noted the sheer lack of discipline in property-men who simply failed to turn up for work because they felt underpaid and were resentful. In Hollywood, cameramen work with ‘perfect organization; in England we work virtually without it.’ In other words the hierarchical structure of production was not working and the cameraman, by virtue of his being responsible for what was actually in the can, was obliged to take responsibility.

Rennahan, like others, noted the lack of experience and commitment of British technicians, who keep ‘British business-men’s hours — interrupted promptly at ten in the morning and four in the afternoon for that time honoured British institution, tea. Lunch is called with clock-like regularity, too. But the amazing thing is tea!’ The ACT’s acetous, but characteristic response was that the ‘*Wings of the Morning* unit was notorious for its utter disregard for health and welfare of its crews’ and that most of the units ‘*do not get paid overtime!*’

Adrian Brunel had written in the ACT’s journal, the previous year that the director of a quickie ‘is invariably an Englishman — we never insult foreigners with the task of making films without adequate material or remuneration.’¹ He had experienced considerable unemployment and resented it deeply, feeling that it was indeed foreigners who were taking positions which should be going to him. He wrote a passionate letter to the President of the BoT in connection with the Cinematograph Films Bill arguing that the ‘big losses’ in British film production have been for the most part on those pictures in which the greatest number of foreign technicians have been employed or in which they have held such key positions as director and producer’.² Foreign technicians ‘lacked familiarity with our studio methods...with our artists, writers, and technicians...even with our currency.’ They were overpaid as well — foreign artists ‘have often been expensive luxuries and bad investments’; they wasted time when they ‘do not know our language’. Brunel objected to the ways in which films had been re-edited for American audiences and scenes had been rewritten

¹ *JACT*, May 1936.

² LAB 8/76 125522, letter to Oliver Stanley, 5 Jan. 1938.

so as not to confuse them. The overpaid technician took his money abroad and sometimes left something of a mess behind¹.

He wrote again a couple of months later that in '15 years as a director of British films, I have been unemployed ten years....I am wondering if the Government will do something to ensure the application of the Aliens Employment Order to foreign film directors'.² His own description of working on Quota pictures, an experience with which he was well acquainted, supports the belief that they contributed to the low standards of British technicians. When John Maxwell claimed to the Moyne Committee that the development of the industry 'is handicapped by extortionate wages throughout the whole of the industry. I used to pay a cameraman £12 per week. Some of them get £100 a week.', Sid Cole called him 'ungenerous' and wondered how many of the British cameramen at Elstree found '£40-£50 in their envelope each week.'³

The resentments were numerous and provide an interlocking fabric of grievances, which were both real and imagined. When ACT raised the question as to whether, for reasons of security, foreign subjects should be allowed to film British defence installations, employment rather than security was really the issue, although its Annual Report for 1936 drew attention to 'the undesirability of granting permits to foreign nationals whose work includes cinematography of Defence establishments....' In an attempt to maintain morale, it noted that 'the subsequent attitude of [the Ministry of Labour] had shown that a number of the points...had been born in mind.' The Ministry had suggested that 'certain companies...have conversations with the Association' and this had sometimes led to 'employment of a British technician

1 Brunel had been associate producer on *The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel*, (LFP-British Ciné Alliance, 1937) and had to give its director, the refugee Hans Schwartz, some support. All the main technicians had been European, although the American, William Hornbeck, had been supervising editor. On the other hand, Brunel's direction of *The Invader* (British and Continental Film Productions, 1936), see below, was considered abysmal.

2 LAB 8/76 125529, letter to Oliver Stanley, 1 April 1938.

3 *JACT*, Feb.-March 1937.

instead of the proposed foreigner.’¹ Alas, the documentary evidence belies the claim. Whilst the Admiralty insisted that only British subjects ‘shall be employed when scenes are being filmed in HM Ships or Naval Establishments.’² the Air Ministry saw that ‘the quality of the film might suffer if we rigorously excluded the employment of aliens.’ Such an occasion had occurred the previous year when MGM British Studios had contemplated producing *Shadow of the Wing*, but could find ‘no British technician with the necessary skill’ and, in the face of ACT representation, a permit had been issued by the Ministry of Labour to a Hollywood cameraman.³ The War Office, too, considered ‘that there are serious objections to interventions by the War Office in regard to a film company’s choice of personnel...and we do not wish therefore to be consulted prior to the grant of permits.’ Understandably, the ‘necessity of making reservations as to the personnel to be employed will be considered when the question of granting War Department facilities to any particular film company arises.’⁴

This then is the background in which the Association of Cinematograph Technicians was born. Rachael Low observes that by the mid thirties, the ACT ‘under the leadership of a keen left-wing group rapidly became an articulate and effective trade union’ which from the outset placed the employment of aliens in British studios high on its agenda.⁵ In fact, the foreign technician was the one single issue, ‘a unifying factor’, as Low calls it, which dominated its policies throughout the thirties and the forties, and through which it argued, in part, that the British film industry should be protected and nurtured by preventing the employment of foreign labour.

The Formation of a Union

The ACT had been formed in an industry with frequently appalling working conditions, not an exceptional situation in the industrial relations climate of the 1930s.

1Annual Report, Year ending 31 Dec. 1936..

2LAB 8/75, letter, 2 Nov. 1937.

3LAB 8/75, letter 6 Oct. 1938. It had taken a year to respond formally.

4LAB 8/75, letter 15 Jan 1938.

5 Low, op. cit., London, 1985, p. 27-8.

Unemployment had risen steadily throughout 1931 and 1932, 'reaching a peak in the third quarter of 1932 when there were almost 3 million people out of work in Great Britain. There were still over 2 million people out of work in 1935 [and] it was not until the first year of the Second World War that unemployment fell below a million'.¹ Foreigners coming to Britain, were perceived as taking British jobs. The *Daily Express* item, 'Dumped Labour Scandal',² was characteristic of the popular anxiety of the period. With 2 411 137 Britons registered as unemployed 'Thousands of pounds [are] spent in subsidising foreigners'. It referred to the 'menace of aliens snatching jobs from British workers' and argued that the Home Secretary should issue a statement which says that 'so long as privation and penury are to be found equally in the ranks of the professions and of less skilled workers, *not one place should be given to any foreigner*.' The 'alien invasion' had left 19 500 in Britain in the first six months of 1933....[Britain] had become a haven of refuge for Germany's political and religious refugees....' It was not only the casual labourer who should be concerned, it was the well-qualified as well. 'Six German Jewish professors have been appointed this month to two years' research fellowships...at Manchester University.... Four German specialists including a physician, a gynaecologist, and a bacteriologist have accepted posts at the Victoria Memorial Jewish hospital, Manchester....There are British Jewish doctors who would no doubt be glad of the opportunity to fill these places.' This broad attack on the employment of refugees finds a parallel in the campaign by the ACT to restrict the employment of foreign artists and technicians. The film industry was capable of a considerable degree of crude exploitation, as the 1927 Cinematograph Film Act had demonstrated; importing qualified technicians, as far as the ACT was concerned, meant that the companies took fewer risks and felt no need to train-up and provide a pool of skilled craftsmen.

1 Stevenson and Cook, op. cit., p. 2-3.

2 *Daily Express*, 21 Sept. 1933.

The film industry followed the larger trends in the economy. In the middle of 1933 there was an upswing in the economy which was partially checked in 1937, but continued with rearmament in 1938-9.¹ The boom of the early 1930s encouraged opportunism and mere speculation in the film production from financial institutions with no long-term interest in it. Consequently, it had little interest in the training of technicians; production companies, with distribution arrangements abroad, were encouraged to suck in trained and expert artists from abroad rather than chance to luck with the less experienced British technicians. There were Hollywood technicians but there was also a growing pool of experienced technicians and artists from Germany and Austria who, throughout the period, arrived in Britain, mostly as refugees, and were as desperately in need of work as the ACT member.

As we have already noted, the foundation stone of ACT was its concern about foreign workers in the British film industry. The 'first whispering of organisation among technicians,' wrote J. Neill-Brown, in an early version of developments,²

arose at the GB Studios at Shepherd's Bush about January or February of 1933. Not long before that the new studios had been opened...heralding in another of the many new eras of British Film prosperity. The first of their productions was *Rome Express* with Esther Ralston (American) and Conrad Veidt (German) photographed by Gunther (sic) Krampf (Austrian) and edited by Fred Smith (American).³ About the same time London Films were beginning to reach the limelight, with Georges Périnal (French cameraman), Hals (sic) Young (American Cutter), Ned Mann (American trick expert) and Vincent Korda (at that time Hungarian art director). Ealing also were importing foreign talent...and BIP followed suit, though to a lesser extent. Even a cursory examination of the production field showed that on the foundation of the 1927 Films Act the less ambitious type of film would be made by British workers and the supers by foreigners. Considerable uneasiness became manifest throughout the industry and came to a head at the Bush ...

1 Stevenson and Cook, op. cit., p. 8.

2 CT, July-Aug. 1938. The ACT did not significantly reinterpret events over the years, although it did attempt to modify memories of its hostility towards alien film technicians. The official history of the ACT confirms the union as having a single aim, See *Action*, London, 1983, ed. John Andow et al., London, 1983, p. 9-10.

3 Directed by Victor Saville, *Rome Express* was also designed by Andrew Mazzei. On it Krampf introduced back projection to Britain. Saville is cited at one of the ACT delegations to the Ministry of Labour as a director who always used British technicians, see below.

By the time of its second AGM, the ACT had 'established' an employment bureau which was 'being effective in placing unemployed members.' More importantly, it had also been 'in touch with the Ministry of Labour, and had been effective in influencing the control of the entry of foreign technicians.'¹ The Union may have begun with 'bourgeois credentials' writes Stephen G. Jones but after the appointment of a Labour Party activist George Elvin as its General Secretary few could doubt its Socialist identity for the Communists Ivor Montagu, Sidney Cole and Ralph Bond were also active within it.² Jones however adds a caveat, and observes that the Association, by placing

the blame for unemployment on foreign technicians deflected debate from other causes, namely the very instability of the industry itself. A less kind analysis might point to the chauvinism of the ACT, particularly at a time when continental refugees were fleeing from Fascist tyranny. Even Ralph Bond slipped into the fray: 'The technicians must no longer be the victims of that inverted form of snobbery which makes a virtue of a foreign name, relegating the native talent to the third rate stuff.'³

Indeed, the xenophobic ring which is to be found in many statements and observations of the period, marked by the careless misspelling of names, is a reminder that hostility towards aliens, even anti-Semitism, is by no means the prerogative of the political right and has a history within the British labour movement itself.⁴

1 *KW*, 6 June 1935.

2 Stephen G. Jones, *The British Labour Movement and Film*, London, 1987, p. 73.

3 *Ibid.* p. 77. Quotation from Ralph Bond, *Left Review*, March 1938. AfM forms initially did not ask a person's nationality, but were sometimes annotated with it at the bottom of the form; later, a question was printed. Some sponsors were better than others. If Ralph Bond, Ivor Montagu or Sid Cole, were recommending an applicant, less than four sponsors would often do. AfM forms also show that technicians who were early branch members have mistakenly come to believe that they were early members of the union. Ralph Bond, aged 30 and at the GPO Film Unit, was member 823. He had been sponsored by Sidney Cole, himself an assistant editor earning £5 per week and member number 472.

4 For a full discussion and many examples of the correlation between the associated issues of hostility to aliens and anti-Semitism, see Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society 1876 - 1939*, London, 1979. On the left, the hostility to aliens often develops from arguments for protectionism.

The ACT made certain assumptions about the labour market, specifically that unemployment amongst its members was created by ‘ace’ foreign technicians taking senior positions on major films. Technicians from abroad whatever their merits prevented native standards being raised. They did not leave Britain when a film was completed but remained behind to work on further features and prevented progressive promotion from taking place among British trainees. As we shall see these claims were plausible but counterfeit.

Training in the past had always required many years of slow progression. Although it would generally take ten years to become a lighting cameraman ACT assumed, or rather argued, that training should be short — perhaps only one film — for a camera operator to assume the role of his senior. The imported technician, no longer required, could be sent ‘home’ although, in disregarding the refugee issue, it noticeably failed to indicate where home was for the refugee. At a point when it became impossible to ignore it, in the light of ‘the present refugee problem,’ its Annual Report for 1938-1939 commented:

The General Council [of ACT] are deeply appreciative of the work of the Trades Union Congress, which had been maintaining refugees since 1933, but is strongly opposed to working permits being granted if analogous British labour is available. Our only concern regarding refugee film workers is that they shall not take employment for which unemployed British subjects are available and equally skilled.

When Sam Eckman of MGM gave evidence to the Moyne Committee in 1936, he had argued that ‘there were simply not enough technicians in the country’ for them to establish their own studio for making quota films.¹ This, of course, was the very point the ACT were disputing and one which resolves itself once it is realized that cultural rather than technical judgements were finally being applied. It was to take another six or seven more years before the ‘British realism’ began to make serious inroads on the British feature film.

¹ Low, *op. cit.* p. 196.

According to Low there were in 1933, 'between twenty and thirty [foreigners] working in British studios, most of them for Gaumont, Gainsborough, Korda and BIP.' Six years later, there were even fewer and the ACT was arguing that 'whenever a technically good refugee enters the country...another not so good foreign technician, who is not a refugee, should...be refused permission for a further stay in this country'¹ In spite of its sectarian tone this is the first indication of a sense of realism within the ACT, a recognition that the refugee could not be returned to Germany or Austria. ACT was now making a distinction between those who were fleeing from countries which Hitler was systematically taking over and those technicians who were being brought in from Hollywood. It was in effect arguing for a quota system, whereby the total number of foreign technicians who were working in Britain would not increase; every refugee technician who was employed would be traded against an American. In the event, all this was of little importance for the war was to intervene.²

'And Still They Come'

Until recently, accounts of the ACT delegations to the MoL have, of necessity, been taken from its own narration. There is now available official documentation which puts a different perspective on the meetings between the ACT and the Ministry. Its deputations certainly played a role in maintaining the morale of its members but the Ministry informed itself from other voices, namely the production companies themselves. In addition it sought confidential advice from other sources as it saw fit.

The ACT first outlined its case with a deputation to the Ministry on 19 March 1936.³ There was, it argued, 'an average number of approximately 100 floating technicians, exclusive of a number of resident aliens, engaged in the production of

¹ Ibid., p. 32.

² After the war ACT looked again for a quota system. See below.

³ *JACT*, May 1936. The deputation consisted of Sidney H. Cole, Desmond Dickinson, Alan Lawson, and the General Secretary George H. Elvin.

British films,' many of which 'cannot be graded as genuinely ace-technicians.' It complained that the high salaries paid to them unduly impressed the Ministry and that the failure of foreign technicians to speak English 'may lead to foreign, or partially foreign crews'¹. In spite of its jaundiced tone the report concluded that the union was 'not unmindful of the important part played by the technicians of other countries in the development of the British film industry', but that the careers of qualified British technicians were being held up by the over-sympathetic consideration given to applications from foreigners.

In its report for Union consumption ACT wrote '...out of 122 applications, the Ministry of Labour were of the opinion that all but 12 should be allowed to work in the BRITISH film industry. There are insufficient safeguards to ensure that foreign technicians...give tuition to British persons....Further, a foreign technician with no knowledge, or only poor knowledge of the English language, is necessarily handicapped in imparting knowledge.'²

Caustic phrasing in the trade press sometimes accompanied the observation that an Englishman was unemployed whilst a foreign-born technician was working. P. L. Mannoock asked in *Kine* 'Are so Many Foreigners Necessary?' Korda's London Films is the initial target of Mannoock's feature, but the shot is soon in all directions:

The chief cameraman and directors of every current Denham film are foreign. This fact could be commented on at length, for it is possible to put up a strong case in their favour. But I cannot see the point of engaging foreign art directors and foreign assistant directors.... There is far too much of this benevolence and giving responsible studio jobs to foreigners, many of them refugees. I should like to see a little more incredulity when Whitehall is assured of their indispensability on any picture.³

1 Low, op. cit. p. 29, rightly points out that, although 'British left-wing circles...were sympathetic to refugees from Nazism...it was clear that it was the Europeans, not the Americans, who were under attack'

2 *JACT*, May 1936.

3 *KW*, 20 Aug. 1936.

Later in 1936 Mannoock asked 'Have We Grown too Cosmopolitan?'¹ and John Grierson, contributed an editorial to *WFN*.² It was to be only the first of his sallies on the subject of the foreign film-maker. He saw that 'the present rush stage' [in production] was necessary because it 'breeds excitement and ambition;' he welcomed 'particularly...the great directorial and script names which are being thrown as security into the financial struggle;' but he added an admonition: 'While we appreciate the quality of directorial and camera aces', he requested producers not to bring 'in every Tom, Dick and Harry, or German or American equivalent, who happen to be related, or for whom they happen to be sorry'. For the rest, he wanted the Government to allow only 'ace' artists to work. 'We have no use for foreign assistant directors, assistant script editors, assistant cameramen and assistant editors.' There were, Grierson wrote a 'thousand young men...ready to fill all the places of apprenticeship.' The foreigner should not turn 'our British hospitality into a racket'. As a *quid pro quo* they should teach the trainee and if they were unwilling, 'let the Ministry of Labour give them no option.'

Again, writing anonymously in *WFN*, Grierson contributed an almost paranoid article entitled 'Aliens Stifle British Talent'.³ He noted that:

the preponderance of aliens in key positions in the industry not only tends to produce a product lacking national character, but also develops an unhealthy inferiority complex in the rest of the technical staff, who are of local growth.... The alien is concerned with getting immediately good results ...for he is not likely to have his contract renewed if he fails to deliver the goods pretty quickly. And he always has the anxiety of wondering how long he will be allowed to stay...bearing in mind the fact that he was not much sought after when he left his own country.... For these reasons the alien expert tends to watch his own interests...rather than train the staff under him....

For Grierson, the exiled technician can do no right, for he proceeds:

1 *KW*, 26 Nov. 1936.

2 'Foreigners in our Midst', *WFN*, May 1936. Authorship from internal evidence. This was Grierson's response to a list of German émigrés compiled by its editor, the emigre film journalist Hans Feld and published the previous month under the heading 'Hegira'.

3 *WFN*, 3 September, 1936. Information on authorship provided by Hans Feld, interview with author, 12 July 1986.

If however, the alien looks forward to settling permanently in the country of his adoption, there is all the more temptation for him not to develop qualities in his subordinates that might bring them on to qualify for the position which he himself holds.

There was to be more. Shortly afterwards he was quoted as saying that 1936 will be remembered as the year in which

Palatial studios accommodated a wild conglomeration of foreigners, whose chief title to make British films was that their slim knowledge of English could more easily be mistaken for genius....When we were abolishing free trade in vegetables we were handing the articulation of our cinema almost exclusively to aliens who, even when they were good, were surrounding themselves with other aliens and suppressing the national idea.¹

The argument persisted with the logic of these situations. 'British apparatus' was being excluded from British studios 'to appease American cameramen and technicians at Denham, Iver, and Elstree....Some French and, it is hinted, some German apparatus is being given preference to British...but the pressure of foreign technicians may not be responsible for this.'²

A second deputation made up of the same team called on the ministry on 15 July 1936 and, with a report entitled 'And Still They Come', announced the event in its journal.³ It had drawn attention to permits which had been granted for junior positions and had supplied the 'names of eleven foreign lighting cameramen' within a single studio, which was used by a number of companies,' where *not a single key position is held by a British technician, except in sound.*' This was clearly a reference to Denham, where it claimed to have drawn attention to 'an entire camera unit, from lighting expert to clapper-boy, being foreign.' If a foreign lighting cameraman had to be employed, the ACT wanted to see entirely British crews and felt that promotion prospects were being damaged for 'promising juniors'. It saw no reason why any foreigner, other than an ace technician should 'be employed in the British Film Industry on any

¹ *JACT*, Feb.-March 1937, quoting from the New Year issue of *The Cinema*.

² *KW*, 20 Aug. 1936.

³ *JACT*, Aug-Oct. 1936.

conditions whatsoever.’¹ Certain foreign technicians were, it claimed working illegally, their names ‘unknown to the authorities’ who had, therefore not granted them permits to work. It reminded its members of ‘the recent circular sent out on the subject of foreign technicians’ and urged its members to write to their Members of Parliament.²

Yet the foreign technician did not go entirely undefended and David Cunynghame³, production manager for London Films, responded by writing: ‘It must be realised that...the British industry needs their support in order to take immediate advantage of the possibility of extending its export trade.’ He refutes the many specific charges directed at his company: the eleven foreign cameramen employed at Denham were employed, not by London Films alone but by six different companies. It was true that there were eleven foreign lighting experts at Denham but there were also two English colleagues which the ACT had overlooked, and the eleven were not working for a single company, but for six. ‘Of course,’ he wrote, ‘there is not at Denham any Camera Unit which is entirely composed of foreigners.’ The owners of Denham Studios ‘have been training individuals in all departments for the past four years’⁴ Three years previously, ‘less than a dozen big pictures were being made annually in England’, now there were probably more than a hundred. There was no comparison between the short and sometimes poor training which British technicians may have received and the experience of the ‘Ace’ foreigner, each with more than ten years behind him. Cunynghame was sensitive to the accusation that Denham was irrationally prejudiced towards employing foreign staff and pointed out that it had been able to establish a 100 % British Make-up Department, that it trained people in its

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Sir David Cunynghame (1902-78) was production manager for London Film Productions and for Korda Film Prods. from 1933-1940, a member of the Board of Directors of Korda Film Prods. Ltd., of LFP Ltd. from 1946-9, and of British Lion Production Assets, Ltd. (controlling Shepperton and Isleworth Studios) 1949-50. He had met Korda, as an employee of Paramount, in Paris, where he was on the studio gate and checking Korda’s timekeeping.

4 *KW*, 3 Sept., 1936; *JACT*, Dec.1936-Jan. 1937.

Special Effects Department, not only dispensing with foreign labour but sending British labour to Hollywood to gain technical knowledge. Of the approximately 40 Departments at Denham, 30 were administered by British subjects, of the 533 weekly staff, only 45 were foreigners. Of these, only two, whom 'the authorities' had accepted as having 'exceptional circumstances' were not ace individuals. They were each 'investigated by the Ministry of Labour and the Home Office as well as by the company which has the extra expense of transportation and other allowances.'¹ Korda's work in England had resulted in an increase in the production of London Films 'from a very few films a year to about thirty-five, thereby giving work to many thousands of British subjects.'

The ACT responded bitterly; although 'foreign assistance has been valuable in the recent great advance of the British Film Industry...it does not follow that they should remain in this country once their usefulness has been served'.² It claimed that 'Some of the best technical work is being done by British technicians' and cited *A Woman Alone*, as a 'case in point where all the technical staff, with one exception, was British'.³

ACT took encouragement from the increase of refusals of permission in 1936. '44 permits were refused last year, as against twelve for the previous year. *It is further no exaggeration to claim that the consistent pressure of the Association, both by deputations to the Ministry of Labour and press propaganda, is an important factor in this improvement.*'⁴ Only five permits had been granted during the first two months of 1937, mostly to work on the French version of a bilingual. With over 30 % of qualified British technicians, 'most of them of long experience and undoubted repute'

1 One of which was compensation for the differential in income tax, where Americans were concerned.

2 *JACT*, Dec. 1936-Jan. 1937.

3 *A Woman Alone* was a curious example to give. It was registered as a foreign film, a Garrett-Klement picture, directed by Eugene Frenke from a story by Fedor Ozep, with designs by A. L. Mazzei. Leo Lania was responsible for sound. Anna Sten was in the cast. The photography had been done by J. J. Cox, who had worked with Hitchcock. Otto Klement was co-producer.

4 *CT*, June-July 1937.

who were 'unable to find employment in the British film industry...[the] conditions under which the permits to foreign technicians were granted has entirely changed.'¹ Its tail up, ACT looked to another meeting with the Ministry.

On 2 June 1937 the General Secretary of ACT George Elvin wrote to Mr. W. Pendrey at the MoL. The General Council had instructed him 'to enquire if [the Ministry] will again receive a small deputation to discuss the question of employment of foreign technicians in the British film industry.' Ominously he continues 'In view of the fact that an improvement appears to be developing in British film production it is felt that a general discussion would be mutually beneficial.'² The deputation, was received on 13 July 1937.³ Elvin was asked to let the Ministry have, in advance, 'a note of any particular points they wish to raise;' meanwhile, H. G. Gee asked W. C. Pendrey to 'provide information on a number of points'.⁴

In its note the ACT claimed that there were 'over 250 British film technicians unemployed. About 25 % of this number are normally employed in jobs where foreign technicians have been employed, namely cameramen, art directors, editors, production managers, assistant directors, still photographers and laboratory technicians.'⁵ Permits should not be granted to foreign technicians when 'British Technicians are available' and:

competent to do the job. The recent slump has resulted in many foreign technicians leaving the country, and it is trusted that there will not be a return of foreign technicians in anything like such numbers immediately production increases.

It suggested that:

1 Annual Report, CT, June-July 1937.

2 LAB 8 75.

3 It was postponed from 8 or 9 July and consisted of the General Secretary, Thorold Dickinson, and Sidney Cole. and was received by H.G. Gee, E.V. Crockenden and W. C. Pendrey.

4 LAB 8 75. They were: '1. The number of permits, renewals and refusals in 1936 and 1937, divided into broad categories, eg. cameramen, editors etc. 2. The best available information on [the] number of foreign technicians who are, at present, employed at each of the leading companies. 3 Details of British personnel in key positions, for reasons of comparison. 4. Numbers, if available, of foreign technicians of employment were cancelled in 1936 or later. That is where technicians were free to take up employment without conditions.'

5 LAB 8/75.

in future permits should not be granted to any company for a technician to fill a similar post to that of a previous foreign technician who has worked...for the same company under training conditions. If the previous technician had done his job satisfactorily the trainee should be competent for employment in the more responsible position.

When production companies applied for permits for foreign labour the Ministry generally submitted names of British technicians, which the ACT provided, for consideration. The ACT now wanted to go further and looked for a virtual embargo on all foreign technicians so that promotion could take place.¹ Ronald Neame and Bryan Langley had stepped up from camera operator when their lighting cameraman had fallen ill.²

There are many senior camera operators who have done a little lighting...but have not had the chance on a full picture....We trust that permits for foreign technicians will not be granted simply because an established British technician is not available, as it does not mean that a competent technician is not available....

1 ACT argued that foreign ace technicians could work in British studios in reasonable numbers, provided that 'equally proficient British technicians' were not deprived of work, British crews were employed, and the ACT was consulted when renewals of permits were requested. In other words, assistant technicians were to report on the quality of the training which they had received. If the trainee was up to standard then the foreign technician could be dispensed with; if he was not then the foreign technician would have failed in his training obligations. Hence an unfavourable report might well lead to an application being opposed but, at the same time, a favourable one may not help either. Foreign technicians were making false claims to expertise. They 'are not always fully investigated [by the Ministry of Labour], or, if they are, the fact that they are definitely not in the front rank does not necessarily lead to the refusal of permits.' See *CT*, Feb. 1936.

2 Ronald Neame took over from Claude Friese Greene on *Invitation to the Waltz* (BIP 1935, dir. Paul Merzbach) and not from a foreign lighting cameraman. Bryan Langley's opportunity came on *Blossom Time* (BIP 1934, dir. Paul Stein) which was being photographed by Otto Kanturek, 'the émigré to whom I owe most,' [letter to author, 9 July 1989]. When he fell ill, BIP 'wanted to replace him with an equally eminent cameraman,' but Kanturek insisted 'that only Bryan could complete the film in his style. "He knows my secrets" he claimed. Thus I was promoted.... Some time later I was lighting cameraman on a film that Otto directed ...' This was *The Student's Romance* (BIP 1935). 'He was certainly the instrument whereby I moved up a rung on the cameraman's ladder. I am forever grateful.' The claim that the émigré deliberately excluded British technicians looks shallow alongside this kind of evidence.

The ACT then listed a number of specific cases.¹ Francis Lyon was ‘not more competent than certain British editors unemployed at the time of the granting of the permit’; Otto Heller ‘cannot be ranked as in the first flight of ace cameramen’² What the Ministry could not have known is that two of deputation which was protesting at Heller working in Britain, Dickinson and Cole, had sponsored Heller’s application to join the ACT the previous December.³ He had been working with Dickinson and Cole on *The High Command* (Fanfare Pictures, 1937), but it doesn’t seem to have generated any loyalties⁴. William Hornbeck ‘has also been acting as manager of Denham Laboratories’ and the ACT was unaware of his qualifications for so doing; Günther Krampf was working on ‘a Jack Hulbert picture, the photography of which...could have been done equally by a British cameraman’; Georges Périnal and Harry Stradling, whilst ‘admittedly “ace cameramen”’ are themselves being trained at Technicolor, which is surely against the spirit of training conditions. Perhaps a labour permit should stipulate that an applicant should only be ‘granted facilities to work on black and white pictures’; William Skall, when filming ‘the recent Trooping of the Colour’ (sic) had not taken a camera operator and therefore had failed to comply with the training regulations; Lloyd Knechtel at Humphries Laboratories should not have

1 Kay Norton, first camera assistant, Francis Lyon, film editor, Steve Fitzgibbons, production manager, Otto Dyer, still photographer, William Hornbeck, supervising editor, and the lighting cameramen Günther Krampf, Georges Périnal, Harry Stradling, Glenn MacWilliams, William Skall, Lloyd Knechtel, laboratory technician, were among the specific cases.

2 This was a nonsense. He had had a long career in Czechoslovakia, with Karel Lamac and Anny Ondra. In the late twenties and early thirties he worked in Germany, mostly for Lamac. His work was greatly admired, Liz-Anne Bawden, (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Film*, Oxford, 1976; Frank Armary, ed, *Universal Film Lexicon*, London, 1932; he was ‘a remarkable colour specialist’, see Felix Bucher, Screen Series, *Germany*, London, 1970; he provided ‘Marvellous colour photography for *Peeping Tom*’, Michael Powell, note to author, 13 Nov. 1969.

3 AfM, no. 1902. He joined when shooting *The High Command*, working on a fee basis which amounted to roughly £100 per week. Dickinson, who worked with Heller again after the war on *The Queen of Spades*, told the author in 1971 that he was fortunate to have Heller on these films. Naturalized in 1945, he had escaped from France to Britain in 1940 and was a member of the Czech Air Force until 1942.

4 Heller’s ‘thick accent’ used to be imitated and he may have not been fully understood by some of the people with whom he worked.

his permit renewed 'as his Chief Assistant, Mr. Anthony is fully competent to do his job.'¹ The Association 'was anxious to ensure that the expected improvement in the British film industry should absorb some of the unemployed, rather than fresh permits should be issued to foreign technicians who had left the industry in the recent slump.'²

ACT was sailing dangerously close to Oswald Mosley's 'programme of "Britain First"' which 'would bar aliens from British jobs....' If Mosley's analysis of the depression pointed towards the Jewish control of commerce, the press, the cinemas, Jewish domination of the City of London, and the killing of industry with the sweat-shops, ³ the ACT saw it primarily as a crisis of capitalism. 'There was virtually no evidence' wrote John Stevenson and Chris Cook 'that unemployment had generated support for the fascists in Britain to any significant degree. Just as the majority of the unemployed maintained their allegiances to the Labour and Conservative Parties in the face of communist overtures, so they remained largely immune to the appeals of fascism.'⁴ The differences were subtle but real and ACT, like other conservative branches of the trade union movement, did not develop a paranoia but sought to persuade the establishment to change its policies in favour of its members.

It was, by the ACT analysis, a classic capital versus labour situation, the employer wanting no more than casual labour and to pay the lowest possible wages. It argued that the so-called 'artistic' skill of the foreign worker was nothing more than technical skill, frequently elaborated in a foreign language. Film was simply a product like many other items in the market. 'The picture would be made in any case', said Elvin, and, therefore it was not necessary to employ the foreign technician. Even art directors, argued Sid Cole, were unlike their counterparts in theatre and ballet. The art director worked 'under the direct supervision of the producer and is responsible for

1 LAB 8 75.

2 LAB 8 75, Minutes.

3 Stevenson and Cook, op. cit., p. 204; Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society 1876 -1939*, London, 1979, p. 175-202.

4 Stevenson and Cook, op. cit., p. 214.

the budget for purchase of material required for sets, arrangement of floor space, adjustment of designs to meet controlled expenditure, etc.’ From this perspective the film art director could ‘be considered strictly as a film technician.’ Similarly a ‘body of consultants’ could assess the merits of foreign technicians utilising ‘a study of trade show reports of pictures’ as a primary source.

Gee was not encouraging. ACT had not recognised that possible poor production would result in a ‘damaging effect on the company’; no advisory body would eliminate ‘the wide divergence of opinion that exists as to the merits of various technicians’. Apart from that, Gee shrewdly pointed out, ‘the work for which the majority of foreign experts was required was half artistic and half technical.’ This applied especially to art directors who could not be assessed in the same way as other technicians.

He was well briefed. Whilst applications had been examined more critically and a couple of applications had been turned down,¹ the anticipated increase in production might result in a greater number of permits being issued. A company spending £100,000 on a production is not likely to be persuaded to employ an unknown British technician, ‘however competent he may be, in a key post’. Naturally, it sought to safeguard its investment and ‘aimed to secure technicians of established reputation for the job.’ The companies could be relied on to satisfy themselves on the capacity of the technicians for whom they requested work permits and, in any event, the Department made ‘very careful enquiries’ on its own account. If companies were forbidden their services, ‘the result in the long run would do considerably more harm than good to the British film industry’. Once more, Pendrey had prepared Gee.² Certainly, the Ministry insisted ‘upon film companies considering British subjects before agreeing to the issue of a permit’ and making it dependent on them having made reasonable effort to ‘engage someone from the industry’. But

¹ For the production manager, Steve Fitzgibbons and the still photographer, Otto Dyer.

² LAB 8/75.

where a sound case is made by the employing company for a permit (this) must have the effect of absorbing the lesser skilled among the unemployed technicians, owing to the imposition of training conditions by the Department. Skilled British technicians are under no obligation to train juniors, but foreign technicians are bound to do so....¹

Neither did the ACT made headway in other areas. Its objection to Périnal and Stradling receiving 'training' at Technicolor was inapposite as Technicolor did not make films; they 'supply technicians skilled in the Technicolour (sic) process' and the Ministry was satisfied that it was part of a general programme which led to the intensification of training for British personnel and helped avoid the American coming to England. It was an advantage to Technicolor's eight British trainees, amongst whom was Jack Cardiff, to have such eminent lighting cameramen around for a month. 'It would be difficult to indicate to Mr. Korda that he should not allow the two ace cameramen...to work on a particular film because it was in colour and not black and white.'

ACT urged that 'the British trainee should be provided with an opportunity of proving his worth. Possibly his first efforts might not be good, but normally he would improve with experience.' The only way 'under the present system' for the trainee to show his value was during the absence, owing to illness...of his tutor'. Elvin wanted an 'ace' technician, once he had trained his British junior, to leave the country so that promotion could take place. If Glen McWilliams had not stayed to train, argued Elvin, then Derick Williams 'would probably have succeeded [to his] post.' But such a policy could not be enforced under the Aliens Order and, anyway, it would be impractical to 'insist that the British trainee should take a key post irrespective of his capacity.' In selecting Glen McWilliams, Elvin had chosen a bad example and the Ministry was well prepared. 'McWilliams was known as a good and unselfish trainer'

¹ This confirms the point made on training by Erwin Hillier, see below. Privately, the Ministry recognised that it had 'no effective means of ensuring that training conditions are properly observed, and that...latent native talent is quickly developed.' See LAB 8/76 136289.

who had trained 'Arthur Crabtree, Derrick Williams (sic) and Jack Whitehead, all of whom had obtained posts elsewhere'. He had, anyway, been chosen by Jessie Matthews who under the terms of her contract with Gaumont-British, 'had the privilege of selecting her own cameraman'.

'Lengthy discussions between MGM and the ACT' had led to a permit being issued for Kay Norton, an acknowledgment perhaps that there had been no satisfactory first camera assistant available. In the case of William Skall, the ACT were incorrect.¹ Otto Heller was a much sought-after cameraman, and in the opinion of several companies, was definitely in the first flight of ace technicians.² The film editor Francis Lyon, of whom the ACT disapproved, was considered by Jack Buchanan Productions Ltd. as 'one of the best editors in the field' and a permit was granted with the proviso that 'the company would employ a British editor who would be likely to succeed Lyon.'³ They were advised that Lloyd Knechtel was 'one of the four experts in the USA on optical trick photography processing' and Humphries were consulted by film companies both here and in the USA 'mainly owing to Knechtel's association with them. He is only too anxious to impart his knowledge and the results of his experience'.⁴

In general terms promotion, naturally, depended on the individual. There were examples of 'cases...of trainees placed under foreign technicians, and subsequently obtaining good engagements.'⁵ Gordon Dines, Gordon Pilkington, Arthur Crabtree,

1 Two British cameramen, Messrs. Henty and Charlton had been allocated to work with him.

2 He was wanted by Trafalgar Films, which was already known to be in difficulties.

3 The two films which Francis Lyon edited for Jack Buchanan had different assistants, *The Sky's the Limit* (1937) had Michael Gordon, *Break the News* (1938) had Frederick Wilson. Gordon had already edited *King Solomon's Mines* (GB 1937 dir. Robert Stevenson) and went on to *Night Train to Munich* (20th Century 1940, dir. Carol Reed). He was supervising editor with Strand and Crown Film Unit during the war, after which he also wrote scripts and directed. Wilson rose through numerous films, including *The Lamp Still Burns* (Two Cities 1943, dir. Maurice Elvey), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (Gabriel Pascal 1945, dir. Pascal) to combine some direction with editing.

4 Knechtel was a partner in George Humphries and was not a wage earner, but took a commission. Consequently, a decision on a further extension was primarily a Home Office matter.

5 Gordon Dines was camera assistant on *The Informer* (BIP 1929, dir. Arthur Robison) with Werner Brandes as photographer, *Rome Express* (GB 1932 dir. Victor Saville) with Günther Krampf, *The Constant Nymph* (GB 1933, dir. Basil Dean) with Mutz Greenbaum. He also worked

Jack Whitehead, were examples. The 'Department can do far more by maintaining satisfactory relations with film companies in regard to training conditions than by pressing for the allocation of trainees to responsible positions before they are competent to take them'. The industry may have attracted a 'great deal of sucker money', as Grierson called it, 'on the heels of Korda's remarkable success with *Henry VIII*'¹ but it was hardly likely to pass over its production decisions to a young and inexperienced vested interest group of trade unionists.

There was also the inevitable case of Denham Studios and Korda. 'By virtue of his foreign experience and associations, [Korda] had a decided preference for foreign technicians and held the view that the really expert British technician did not exist. As a result, a very large number of foreigners found employment at Denham Studios.' Once more the Ministry was armed. 'The comparatively large numbers of foreigners was due to the heavy production schedule and should be considered in relation to the large number of British technicians and other people employed by this company'. Sidney Cole responded with a little augmentation; Victor Saville, 'the well-known British producer...rarely resorted to the employment of a foreigner.' Like so many ACT claims it needs to be examined carefully for all thirteen films which Saville had directed since the inception of ACT had been designed by foreigners from Europe, the last twelve had been photographed by Hollywood or European lighting cameramen.²

with Jan Stallich on *The Lonely Road* (1936, dir. James Flood) and *The Show Goes On* (1937, dir. Basil Dean). He became director of photography at Ealing. Gordon Pilkington had trained under the editor Conrad von Mollo. Arthur Crabtree was camera operator to the photographers Günther Krampf and Glen McWilliams before being made up to director of photography on *The Love Test* (Fox Brit. 1935, dir. Michael Powell); subsequent films include Will Hay films and two films for Carol Reed, *Bank Holiday* (Gainsborough 1938) and *Kipps* (20th Century 1941); he became a director for Gainsborough after the war. Jack Whitehead joined Gaumont-British in 1932 and worked on special effects for *The 39 Steps*, *The Tunnel*, and *Secret Agent*. After the war he worked on *Odd Man Out*, *The October Man*, and *Hamlet*, among others.

¹ *WFN*, May 1936.

² Cole, as an editor, was noticing that Saville had used British editors on six of them; he was perhaps also hoping that the Ministry was not that well informed.

Gee, in spite of dismissing its claims, considered that the deputation had 'put their case well'.¹ If ACT made any headway, official documentation fails to reveal it.

The Return to the Charge

On one point ACT had been right, 'Elmer (sic) Williams is working for Merrill-White without permission'.² Permission to stay 'was refused in December 1936', but a police report confirmed him to be in the cutting rooms at Denham Laboratories for the 'editing of the film produced by Mr. Herbert Wilcox entitled *Victoria the Great*.' The ACT had first complained in March 1937 and the Home Office had initially understood that he would be 'leaving the country' for America on 15 April but this date was extended to the 16 July as Merrill-White was winding up and he would definitely be leaving on 21 July 1937.³ The stable door had been closed too late.

ACT was not discouraged by the Ministry's lack of sympathy and continued to argue that it was uniquely qualified to judge a foreigner's expertise. In 'What's Wrong?': an Involuntary Symposium',⁴ the ACT juxtaposed an article from *Kine* by H. Chevalier, with contributions from George Elvin, K.C. Fairbairn, 'Flicker' and C.A. Lejeune. Chevalier wrote of the contrast between the ACT's 'war against the retention of foreigners' and the 'whirlwind development of the new British production industry.' 'Has Chevalier', asked George Elvin rather disingenuously, 'never heard of Alfred Hitchcock and Herbert Wilcox, British directors who, with entirely British crews, have for years been making films which have been universally praised for

1 LAB 8 75, note to Besso. When Louis Besso died on 28 Feb. 1945, aged 60, the JIC, 16 March 1945, noted that he had held 'a key position' in the Ministry of Labour. A full obituary, 23 March 1945 described 'his courage' as 'proverbial...while bombs were falling nearby, the office fireguards used to see Mr. Besso emerge from the front door, put up his umbrella (presumably to ward off stray pieces of shrapnel) and imperturbably set off on his homeward journey.'

2 LAB 8 75.

3 This bone of contention', as Gee described it, did leave on 20 July 1937. The ACT had monitored events closely. Herbert Wilcox Productions had specifically stated that Williams would remain a visitor, although it had allowed him to work on *Queen of the Clouds* (Imperial 1937 dir. Wilcox).

4 CT, June-July 1937.

their technical qualities?.... With one exception every technician on *The High Command* was British'.¹ He goes on to mention that there are 'dozens' of British technicians who 'have proved their prowess by work with Alfred Hitchcock, Herbert Wilcox, Alexander Korda, and other British producers.'²

ACT was soon seeking a further meeting, this time with the Minister himself³, 'to make representations...especially on your Ministry's policy on labour permits to foreign technicians before the passing into law of the new Cinematograph Films Act.' 'You will see', noted Gee good-humouredly to Besso on 13 July 'that the ACT have returned to the charge....We saw them...quite recently, and had a long and amicable discussion with them, but we had to make it clear that we could not go as far as they wished on certain points.' This time ACT produced a considerably more formidable document⁴ and had grown even more skilful at lobbying support.⁵ It was joined by Maurice Elvey, President of the British Association of Film Directors, who was

1 Elvin exaggerates for not all technicians on the films of Wilcox and Hitchcock were British. Of the seven films Hitchcock directed in Britain before leaving for Hollywood only *The Lady Vanishes* can really be said to be clean in this respect. Five were designed by either Alfred Junge or Oscar Werndorff, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* was photographed by Curt Courant, with Erwin Hillier as Assistant. Erich Pommer produced *Jamaica Inn* and Harry Stradling was the photographer.

Wilcox's recent films *Victoria the Great* and *Sixty Glorious Years* had been photographed and edited by the Americans William Skall and James Elmo Williams, respectively. *Nurse Edith Cavell*, which was also edited by Williams, was registered as a foreign film. He was right about *The High Command*; the one exception was its photographer, the ACT member, Otto Heller.

2 Korda was now naturalised and the ACT could no longer, consider him a foreigner. 'Korda, Sandor (known as Alexander Korda) Country Hungary. Date of Oath of Allegiance 28 Oct. 1936.' No. of Certificate BZ 709. Although it was not Korda's reason, naturalization was a path recommended by some émigré organisations in order to eliminate the 'alien' charge.

3 LAB 8 75. Letter from Elvin, 23 Aug. 1937.

4 LAB 8 75. As an applicant had to give his or her nationality on an AfM, this might lead to a question over Labour Permits. See, for example, ACT Application for Membership No. 1708, Philipp Guidobaldi, an Italian supervisor at Gaumont-British for the making of miniature models for special effects.

5 R. W. Sorenson, MP, for example, wrote to the Minister on 14 Sept. 1937, urging that the deputation be received. Sorenson was the Labour Member for Leyton West. 1964, created Life Peer. For immediate publicity see, for example, *Daily Herald* 4 Nov. 1937. 'Consideration is being given by the Ministry of Labour to strong representations made by a deputation this week that no further permits be given for the film industry until employment among British technicians has been reduced to a minimum.'

broadly in sympathy with the ACT and had added his own memorandum, including a list of names, to complain about foreign film directors working in Britain¹ 'It is one of our main difficulties', noted Gee, 'that there is no Producer Federation who could be invited to put the companies' point of view....' but as the BoT was in touch with producers, it was thought that it may 'be able to offer assistance' with regard to 'the possible effect of the Government's proposals' on the quota legislation.² Political and constituency commitments meant that they only finally met on 2 November 1937. It was the last meeting of its kind. In the meantime the Board prepared itself by drawing up its own considered report and response.³

The subject of the Quota Bill had been raised at the Trades Union Congress in September 1937, when Tom O'Brien had moved a resolution directed against American domination of British film production. Lord Moyne's Committee had considered it 'a national necessity, not only to protect British cultural and educational standards from alien disparagement and infiltration, but particularly to safeguard the employment of thousands of British workers of varying grades'.⁴ O'Brien argued that expensive films would be eligible for quota, and producers would want to employ

1 LAB 8/75. Letter from Elvey to Pendrey, 29 Oct. 1937. It listed 'Lee Garmes, Bartlett Cormack, Roy William Neil, Andrew Marton, Hans Schwartz, Thornton Freeland, William K. Howard, Fred Zelnick, Lloyd Bacon and Karl Grune.' Cormack, the Ministry noted, was scriptwriting and not directing. (He had, in fact, been the original director of *Vessel of Wrath* but had been dismissed). It had no knowledge of either Zelnick or Bacon working, not surprisingly as Zelnick was already naturalized and Bacon did not direct here. Marton, Schwartz, Zelnick and Grune had come from Europe, the others were from Hollywood. Elvey was confused and didn't complain about having worked with the German producer, Kurt Alexander, as early as 1931, or with a whole string of European designers and photographers.

2 LAB 8 75. The ACT claimed to have made representations to the Board, but, in fact, had only 'submitted their observations on certain proposals which we made and were subsequently incorporated in a White Paper (Cmd. 5529).... The Association...again pressed the suggestion that all...quota films should not employ more than one foreign technician. We have not adopted this proposal....', Ibid., Fennelly to Besso, 18 Oct. 1937.

3 LAB 8/75. Note 28 Oct. 1937. Although the deputation did not intend raising questions directly concerned with the forthcoming Cinematograph Film Act, Gee asked the Board for its observations and invited them to send a representative as, from previous experience, the deputation was apt 'to roam rather widely over the field'.

4 Report and Proceedings at the 69th Annual TUC, 6-10 Sept. 1937, pp. 367-371. Tom O'Brien was General Secretary of NATKE. A protest at the phrasing from R.A.Bradfield of the Shop Assistants Union, had no effect.

fewer British technicians without a track record. The new Act, would lead to a growth in production, not necessarily to employment for British technicians, but to an influx of Americans. ACT wanted the number of foreign technicians on any quota film restricted to one.¹ It continued to be concerned over the non-compliance with training conditions of foreign technicians and added, for good measure, the undesirability 'of granting permits to foreign nationals whose work includes cinematography of Defence establishments.'

Deputed to meet the delegation, on this occasion was the Parliamentary Secretary R. A. Butler who was to be briefly the department's Minister, in 1945. He thanked Besso for 'the trouble taken with this brief. It is a valuable piece of work which is very useful to me and gives a general picture of the problems confronting this new and at times petulant industry.'² Whilst the Ministry had obviously helped the ACT by drawing the attention of production companies to the ACT's Employment Bureau, he failed to see 'why a self appointed body should demand the *right* to be consulted on every permit, but I can see their general anxieties about the new legislation.'³ Whilst the Department was willing to 'seek advice for information on points of difficulty...no undertaking can be given to consult ACT in every case or automatically act upon their advice when proffered....We cannot...look to the Association for disinterested advice, nor for an unbiased estimate of their members' merits, any more than we can look to the companies to present their case in a disinterested or objective way.' With the growth in numbers of more British expert technicians during the last two years, 'applications for permits have been subjected to very close examination,' but the need to grant permits to foreign technicians would continue 'for some time to come'.

1 The memorandum clarified the hardened ACT position on foreign technicians. It did not oppose such foreign technicians as it 'recognised as "aces" where there was no equivalent British technician either unemployed or available on loan from his company.' It opposed all others.

2 LAB 8/75. It notes the dates of previous delegations as March 1936, July 1936, and July 1937. It had first consulted the Department as early as July 1935.

3 LAB 8/75. Minute 1 Nov. 1937.

In general, the Ministry found that ‘the magnitude of the production’ was ‘an important factor in deciding the choice of technicians’ and film companies claimed that expensive productions could be easily ruined by any unsuitable senior technician. Consequently, ‘it has been the practice of the Department since January 1936, to consult the Post Office Film Unit. The former director of the Unit, Mr. Grierson, classified for our guidance the aliens within the country into three categories.’ There were top aces who should be allowed to stay in Britain permanently, those who can be ‘dispensed with after British subjects have been trained for replacement’, and those who should go now.¹ It ‘is, however, and always will be, a difficult thing for the Department to decide whether any of those available are, in fact, capable of doing the work required, given the creative and artistic aspect which characterises a great deal of it, from directing down to editing. This is our real point of divergence from the ACT.’ With a flash of inspiration it also observed, ‘Quite obviously, a man may work under a Capra for years, and though at the end of that time he will almost certainly be a good director, he is not at all likely to be another Capra....We cannot...force companies to take undue risks by the employment of technicians who...have not...the requisite skill and experience....We could not...tell companies that there are British camera operators available and one of these might be able to do the job if given a chance.’² Perceptively it concluded that

it cannot be too strongly emphasised that most of the difficulties of the Department, the ACT and the companies themselves can be traced to the lack of any properly organised scheme of recruitment and training, which, in its turn, can be traced to the lack of organisation which marks the British film industry. The companies distrust and dislike each other and all the problems which arise have of necessity to be dealt with piecemeal..³

1 This corresponded with ‘a similar unofficial classification made during 1936 by Mr. Mabane, MP, who was in close touch with general film activities.’ The Rt. Hon. William Mabane was a Liberal National MP for Huddersfield until 1945. He was PPS to Rt. Hon. Alfred E. Brown, the Minister of Labour, and held various Parliamentary Secretary posts. Briefly Minister of State, Foreign Office in the Churchill 1945 Government. Created Baron Mabane 1962.

2 The ACT was creating concern without evidence, quite deliberately. British technicians had no training obligations.

3 LAB 8/75 . Official figures show, for the period 1 Jan. 1937 to 30 Sept. 1937, that of the 49 permits issued, the ACT was consulted on over 32 of them, making 17 favourable

Hence the department continued to examine each case individually and there were exceptions to rules. Permits were generally refused for assistants but René Clair was allowed to retain his personal assistant, 'having regard to the long association of the two and to the individualistic nature of Clair's work'¹.

The deputation was introduced by Mr. Reginald Sorenson, MP.² The questions of training, of allowing other than first-rate foreign technicians to work in Britain, and the question of foreign directors were immediately raised. Elvey said that he knew 'of no instances where companies...had tried to find a suitable British director, and cited several foreign directors who...should not have been allowed to direct films here.'³ His association BAFD had been active before ACT existed, but had attracted little sympathy. Its own deputation to the MoL as early as October 1931 over the 'importation of foreign directors' had been quickly cut down to size. 'On the surface, I suppose, a case could be made out for the legalised protection of the livelihoods of these [British] gentlemen,' P. L. Mannoock commented cynically in *Kine*; 'the supplanting of any Englishman in charge of a film is a matter of grave national concern....I should be sorry to see [our] "washouts" protected by the Ministry of Labour or anyone else....How would Hollywood's creativeness have fared if foreigners had been excluded....'⁴

recommendations and 15 unfavourable ones. In 1936, out of 118 permits issued, it had been consulted on 61 occasions and had made 37 recommendations and 24 unfavourable ones. Their distribution between companies is surprisingly even. Whilst a large company like London Film Productions had five foreign cameramen, it had only two foreign editors and two writers. In other categories, it was employing only one or none. Seven writers were spread through six companies and six editors were to be found across five companies.

1 Similarly, the American, Joseph Newman, then an assistant director, was allowed to work at MGM British.

2 It comprised Anthony Asquith, George Elvin, Thorold Dickinson, and Henry Harris for the ACT and Maurice Elvey representing the BAFD. The Board of Trade also sent a representative.

3 LAB 8 75. Presumably the names which he had listed to Pendrey.

4 *KW*, 15 Oct. 1931.

Elvey's acerbic tone rebounded badly. The BAFD did not accept that 'every effort' had been by companies to find suitable British employees. There were many examples of 'foreign directors, authors, editors and others — often mediocre and inferior to British technicians —...displacing British talent. And in all cases the imported foreigners have been paid salaries far in excess of those paid to their British counterparts.' Foreign promoters 'have established units in this country with British money and unfortunate results...they have spoiled the money market for reputable British producers...insisting on employing foreign directors of various kinds: racial sympathy inevitably plays a very big part.'¹ Money had been wasted by foreign producers, attributable to 'their being unable to adjust themselves to British studio conditions or to an inability to understand our language', and to their large salaries which had been uncut whilst those for British directors had suffered reductions of between 25 % and 50 % He repeated Brunel's gripe of the previous year: the foreign director did not have the indignity of working on quickies. 'For him were reserved the apparent "plums"...films aimed at the world market, of astronomical budgets and almost unlimited time. The box office fate of an enormous proportion of these pictures gives rise to the doubt as to whether the employment of foreign directors is essential to financial success.'

Butler was quick off the mark and made it clear that it was the 'definite policy' of the Ministry to consider applications on their merits. He 'wished to make it clear that...it would be continued'. He had found Elvey's reference 'to the Department's persisting in this policy rather repugnant'. It was fairly clear that the deputation was not going to get very far. The Ministry could not 'take the line that one man was as good as another', especially where directors were concerned, and it was unable to impose the same restrictions as in the case of technicians.

Similarly whilst Butler emphasised that the number of permits for technicians had been fewer in the current year, the Ministry would not entertain 'any system of sliding

scale in relation to the volume of employment.’¹ Butler asked the ACT, which looked for a progressive reduction in the numbers of foreigners employed, to look at the matter another way and consider the long-term advantages of foreign companies producing here. It was no good complaining about comparative wage rates for an important feature of the Act was ‘that the wages and conditions of employment proposed for a foreigner are not less favourable than those commonly accorded to British employees for similar work’, an obvious protection to prevent the forcing down of wages. This meeting, the last before the war, had been a failure. Its concern over the effect of the new Quota act had been noted, but nothing else had struck home.

A simple protectionist policy then was not to be followed. To a great extent, the numbers of foreign technicians who were employed by companies reflected the size, the international standing and the markets in which production companies wanted their films to succeed. It was something over which, in principle, the MoL could have little control.

The ACT’s anxieties were not the only concern of the British film industry. On the evening of the ACT delegation, ‘Leading British film producers’, including Isidore Ostrer and John Maxwell, met with some fifty Members of Parliament at the House of Commons to promote the British Films Advancement Council.² It urged the government to seek some reciprocity with the Americans to get British films onto screens throughout the Empire, screens which were controlled by foreigners. Even distribution did not guarantee appropriate exhibition and whilst the occasional film a *Henry VIII* or a *Victoria the Great* was able to find success in American cinemas, the majority found no outlets at all.

The continued emphasis on the American market by Korda, for example, was important in this connection. Whereas ABPC employed only one non-British

1 A number of foreign film workers had, in fact, had their conditions cancelled and were, therefore, able to work freely. They included Alberto Cavalcanti who was at the GPO Film Unit, Paul Stein at BIP, Vincent and Zoltan Korda and Robert Flaherty who were at London Films. Extensions had been granted to a number of others.

2 *Birmingham Post*, 3 Nov. 1937.

cameraman and two non-British writers, the respective figures for London Film Productions were six and five. Even tiny companies like Criterion Film Productions, which had UA distribution in the USA, employed a non-British cameraman and editor.¹ ‘Training and development of British technicians had been substantially within the quota film industry,’ the MoL observed, which ‘has meant that the work has been done often in unfavourable conditions’ and led London Films ‘to attribute the comparatively low standard of some technicians to their employment on quota films.’² It was widely accepted, implicitly by the ACT and explicitly by the MoL ‘that there is insufficient skilled British personnel on the technical side for the production of films of the quality aimed at.’³ It appeared that British personnel would never be trained up to standard. Even if they were, problems of distribution and exhibition abroad remained.

A Technician’s Quota

As we have seen, the ACT deputation did persuade Butler to reflect on the forthcoming Films Act. He wrote to R. D.F Fennelly at the BoT expressing his concern as to the consequences of the Bill. ‘The question of the employment of foreigners upon quota films has not given us much trouble, for the simple reason that, in the conditions in which quota films were produced, companies did not wish to employ expensive foreign experts.’⁴ He saw that more expensive quota films might well prove a threat to the employment of British technicians, even on quota films. Film companies would be able to meet the requirement of employing 75 % British personnel and be in a position to pay for the foreign expert. The difficulty remained that ‘we are by no means satisfied that the supply of really first class technicians is at

1 Douglas Fairbanks, Jnr. was a director and had arranged distribution of its films through United Artists.

2 LAB 8/76 136289; KW, 14 May 1936.

3 LAB 8/76 136289.

4 LAB 8/76 125522. Butler to Fennelly, 15 Nov. 1937.

present sufficient to meet the industry's needs....What would seem to be really wanted is a properly worked out scheme of recruitment and training, agreed between the two sides of industry', but Butler saw little hope of it whilst the industry was 'in its present disorganised state.'

Might there not be, Butler wondered, in relation to the Cinematograph Films Bill, ways of progressively reducing the dependence of the British film industry on foreign personnel. This was exactly what the ACT was calling for, and in a further letter he recommended 'laying down conditions calculated to ensure the *progressive* employment of British subjects on the technical side....' What was really required 'is some statutory provision which will make companies look to the future and adopt methods of training and recruitment likely, in a reasonable time, to make the foreign expert a luxury instead of a necessity.'¹ The ACT had, indeed, affected his thinking.

The ACT had wanted the number of foreign technicians employed on a film under the Act to be restricted to one, but the suggestion was not accepted.² But it was not without its supporters. Moving an amendment to restrict the employment of foreign technicians, Mr G.Strauss said in the House of Commons, at the Committee stage of the Cinematograph Films Bill 'there is no doubt that the film industry in this country has been enriched and strengthened in the past by the help rendered by first-class technicians — cameramen, directors, producers, and so on — from America, and perhaps even more particularly by *emigrés* (sic) from European countries,'³ but employing Americans, simply because American money was involved, was unsatisfactory. Oliver Stanley, responding, was able to observe that he 'was particularly glad to hear him disclaim' the actual terms of the amendment. His disquiet was to be met by the condition that under the new Act, a registered British film would

1 LAB 8 76 125529. Butler to Capt. D. Euan Wallace, M.P, Board of Trade, 1 Feb. 1938. Wallace (1892-1941) was Parliamentary Secretary to the BoT at the time.

2 *CT*, April-May 1937.

3 Parliamentary Debates, HoC, 21 Dec.1937. [359-362].

have 75 % of labour costs going towards British people. The Government had arrived at a form of protectionism.

The campaign, however, continued. When, in July 1938, Sorenson asked the Minister of Labour ‘how many foreign technicians are now working with permits in this country?’, the reply was the astonishing low figure of 24 although there were, in addition, another 23 specialists, producers, directors and scenario writers.¹ Sorenson, expressed the ACT’s position and urged that as ‘there is undoubtedly a large number of cinema technicians unemployed...that no permits will be issued for foreign technicians while we have technicians for the jobs?’ *The Cine-Technician* added a sinister reminder in its report that there were an additional 30 technicians omitted from these totals, technicians who were now ‘resident aliens’ or had been naturalized as British subjects, and dismissed any significance of an actual fall in the number of applications for foreign workers; it was due not to any change of policy by producers, merely to a slump in film production.² The ACT’s Annual Report for 1938-39 carried a depressing note. The Minister of Labour had refused a further delegation.

¹ HoC, 21 July 1938 [338]; *CT*, Sept.-Oct. 1938.

² *CT*, Sept.-Oct. 1938.

The War and the ACT

Introduction

The ACT in the 1930s and the 1940s was, in practice, the prisoner of circumstances. For the most part it was hemmed in by the harshness of the film industry and by a social and political situation over which it had no control. Any influence ACT had over the employment of foreigners was strictly limited to drawing violations to the attention of the MoL.

As Low points out, by April 1939 ‘the wave of refugees [technicians] was virtually over. Most had passed to other countries’¹ Alexander Korda had gone to the USA, taking with him the composer Miklós Rózsa; innumerable other technicians directors and producers had similarly moved towards Hollywood in the years before the war:² The war, therefore, brought an end to ACT’s immediate problems with regard to foreigners and, because labour was scarce, provided it with some of the influence for which it was looking. Unemployment fell for film technicians as ACT members enlisted in the forces. The alien film-makers, producers and directors who had not left for America before the outbreak of war were, with rare exceptions, summarily interned in 1940. The initial intention was to deport them; the theatre and ballet designer, Hein Heckroth, who was to become the designer for Powell and Pressburger, was among those sent to Australia aboard the *Dunera*, whilst the young Ernest Borneman was shipped off to Canada. Those interned in England for varying

1 Low, *op. cit.*, p. 32. She gives a figure of ‘about 20’, the same as she gives for 1933, and probably derived from the official figures; it is too low if all categories of film workers are included.

2 René Clair, Karol Rathaus, Hanns Eisler, Friedrich Feher, Leopold Jessner, André Marton, Richard Oswald, Franz Planer, Erich Pommer, Karol Rathaus, Eugen Schüfftan, Joe Strassner, Ernst Toch, Berthold Viertel, Carl Zuckmayer, among them.

periods included: Alfred Junge, Emeric Pressburger, Allan Gray, Rudolph Katscher, Heinrich Fraenkel and the animator Peter Sachs, all of whom were sent to Huyton.¹ Along with enlistment, therefore, internment took a selective toll on the British film industry and, temporarily at least, removed a considerable thorn from the side of ACT. It opened the door to the ACT's most influential period and for the first time gave it an opportunity to control the conditions of employment for its members.

Immediately war was declared ACT was quickly behind the war effort. It was quick to make contact with Government Departments and the Ministry of Information. The MoI is to 'be responsible for all Government propaganda, including films'². For all the concern it had shown about the effect of the new Quota act a few years before it had now become one of its most stalwart supporters. When it discovered that the BoT intended suspending the Cinematograph Films Act 'for the duration of the war' Elvin immediately wrote to its President arguing for its retention and reminding him that

if the quota legislation is repealed it may lead to a repetition of the unfortunate position which arose during the war of 1914-1918, when the American film industry largely captured the British film market. a calamity from which we have only recently begun to recover, and for which recovery the quota legislation is largely responsible.³

The BFPA and the Film Industry's Employees' Council immediately launched a campaign and met with Oliver Stanley⁴ to persuade him to rethink the Board's policy.⁵ 'One thing remains clear,' the ACT noted in its journal, but for the prompt

1 For more information on internment see François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, London, 1940, reprinted 1988, and Peter and Leni Gillman, *Collar the Lot!*, London, 1980. They were generally in good company: the creator of photomontage, John Heartfield, the eminent choreographer and ballet master Kurt Jooss, the sculptor, George Ehlich, the historian and sociologist Franz Borkenau, most of whom were known as fiercely anti-Nazi, are just examples. Fraenkel, whilst in internment, paradoxically received assistance from the HO in writing a book for Victor Gollanz 'stating the case of the German political exiles', see Heinrich Fraenkel, *Farewell to Germany*, London 1959 pp. 27-8.

2 CT, Sept.- Oct. 1939.

3 Ibid.

4 President of the BoT, May 1937- Jan. 1940.

5 BFPA represented the employers, the Film Industry's Employees' Council represented NATKE and ACT.

action of the ACT 'the Quota Act would have gone and the film industry would have been left to suffer a similar fate to that experienced in the last war.'¹ It was, so it was claiming, achieving the kind of influence it felt was necessary.

During the war the official ACT account relates, 'ACT found itself in the surprising...position of having a boom on its hands due to its new status.' Its employment bureau became recognised by the MoL as the official vetting body for war time film technicians — whose work was now deemed to be a

reserved occupation....George Elvin sat on the appointments boards for Service film units and he managed to negotiate a rank for ACT members, with clapper boys being unofficially...privates, cameramen as captains, directors as majors....This sort of understanding made ACT an exceptional trade union during the war in so far as it maintained its own structures with in the Services....The war enabled ACT to prove a fundamental point, namely, that there was no need to continue to import large numbers of foreign technicians in order to keep a healthy and vigorous film industry going. It should be said however that the union was never xenophobic in its attitude to technicians from abroad, realising that the employers often operated on a global scale.... Refugee film-makers were welcomed during the war and the union did everything it could to facilitate either temporary or full membership for them.'²

These are claims that need to be carefully examined, but political events certainly favoured the ACT which grasped the opportunity to control entry into the industry and to pursue its own long-term industrial strategy, namely its aspiration to achieve a closed shop for technicians and to create an industrial union for the film industry. Although Anthony Asquith and Ian Dalrymple had both joined the union in the mid-1930s,³ directors and producers were rarely to be found amongst its members before the war. After 1940 there was a startling transformation, and writers, associate producers and other categories of film artist who were still available for work, clamoured to become members. Not the least of its attractions, as we have noted, was that it offered a reserved occupation, but more significantly it was approaching industrial unionism.

1 *CT*, Sept. -Oct.1939.

2 *Action*, ed. John Andow et al, op. cit., p. 21-23. The evidence does not confirm that refugees were welcomed by ACT during the war.

3 *AFM*, No. 1425. 27 July 1936, and No. 2002, 29 June 1937. Dalrymple described himself as a writer and director. Other directors who had joined included Robert Stevenson.

War-time Membership of the ACT

The problem of the foreign technician for the ACT was partly alleviated by the war, for in 1940, internment had dealt a rather blunt blow to many who had remained in England. They were only slowly released to continue their careers. Shortage of labour strengthened the union's hand and on 14 September 1942, for example, a negotiated standard agreement with the Short Film Producers obtained salary increases, an agreed 44 hour week with overtime payments to the lower salaries grades, and other advantages. An experienced director or lighting cameraman was to receive a minimum of £12.10s.0 d. per week, an experienced art director, editor, or script-writer, £10.0 s 0d. a week.¹ But the ACT report for the following year 1943-1944 issued a warning: 'It would have been thought that the war-time record of British technicians would have dispelled once and for all the eager anxiety of certain producers to employ foreign technicians. This is unfortunately not so....' It objected to 'their promiscuous employment to the detriment of equally competent technicians'²

A significant advantage of industrial unionism for the ACT was that not only would it be able to influence all categories of film workers, it would be able to control entry into the industry and establish the conditions for employment of any foreigner for whom a work permit was being sought. Behind its thinking one can sense the desire to bring stability to a tempestuous industry through some form of state support or through nationalisation. In addition the war led to some control over aberrant producers and was to give some indication of what centralisation might mean, for throughout the period the Government through the MOI was able to influence the

1 INF 202. By feature film standards, these salaries were extremely low, but they were compatible with pre-war salaries. The important feature was that the ACT had secured an agreement.

2 Annual Report, 1944-45.

production of films by effectively controlling the supply of film stock to film companies.

As we have seen throughout the 1930s the ACT opposed applications for permits to work, but once foreigners had established themselves in Britain either temporarily or permanently it adopted the view that it was better to have them as members of the ACT than not. Hence, hostile as the ACT was to intrusions by Americans and Europeans, the American cine-photographers Lee Garmes, Harry Stradling and Philip Tannura, for example, all became members.¹ From the very beginning however, Application for Membership forms were sometimes annotated and a person's nationality added to the bottom of the form; later a specific question on the application requested it. In April 1936 an application from a young camera assistant, a refugee from Germany Karl Kayser, was received with hostility. He was finally accepted but all the information on his form was to be checked. Had he really been working in the film industry since 1930? Had he really applied for naturalization? Did he have a Ministry permit to work the industry? Could references be obtained for him, 'particularly [from] persons in England?'²

There is no evidence that during the war ACT handled applications from refugees any differently from other applications for membership and no evidence that its policy towards the foreign technician was in any way modified. Its claims to have 'welcomed' them needs to be qualified. The primary source of evidence lies in the forms which film technicians completed at the time of their application for membership which offer much revealing detail and contributes to an overall understanding of ACT's thinking at this time.

On their Application for Membership many refugees were anxious to explain their predicament and expressed a combination of resentment for the events that had caused

1 Nos.1197, 1897, 1195 respectively.

2 AfM, Membership No., 1391. Erwin Hillier, who 'wanted to give him a helping hand,' had been one of his sponsors. Kayser had his application for naturalisation rejected and, in 1940, he was interned in Australia, where he remained throughout the war.

them to be in exile and pleaded for understanding. Francis Bieber who started work at Diagram Films Ltd. as an artist in the Cine Diagram Section in January 1943, gave the following information: 'German Refugee. Resident here since 1933. All conditions cancelled 1938'¹; the 27 year old control assistant, Gabrielle Gutkind, who was working in the transfer department of Technicolor and joined the industry in September 1944, gave her nationality as 'None, previously German'²; Ulrich Cassirer, a teenage sound trainee at Gainsborough Studios in May 1942, gave his nationality, less comfortably, as 'Regarded as German'³; another German-born artist Curt Laurentzsch who had been working at Diagram Films Ltd. since December 1942, gave his nationality as 'former German'. He had been an active trade unionist in Germany, a member of Bund der Technischen Angestellten und Beamten since 1924, prior to the German Labour Front, but as he had only recently entered the film industry he too was allotted War Emergency Membership.⁴ Michael Seligman, a 17-year old assistant in the Titles and Printing Department at British-Paramount News, simply declared 'None' against his nationality.

Newcomers to the industry were generally not accepted as members during the war so the foreign technician, unless it could be established that he had been employed in the industry before it, was only given temporary membership. Prior to 1939 there was no such category and working applicants, if suitably supported with nominees, were quickly enrolled. It may therefore be argued that ACT policies after 1939 were more restrictive to foreign technicians than they had been in the past and that it was less altruism which directed its policy towards the foreign technician during the war, than the shortage of British technicians.⁵

1 AfM WEM No.5063.

2 AfM WEM No 6900. She was being paid on an hourly basis of 2 - per hour,

3 AfM WEM No 4092.

4 AfM WEM No 5062.

5 There is no indication that any suitably sponsored application before the war led to a refusal of membership to a foreign technician. Many foreign technicians did not join the ACT.

The acute shortage of skilled staff which hit the industry during the war is noticeable also from a study of the Application for Membership forms. During 1943 we discover that the names of sponsors became less important than recruitment and applications from all quarters were accepted virtually without question. The ACT's strategy remained intact however and the new categories of membership were stamped or hand-written underneath their membership numbers, a reminder that employment would probably cease with hostilities and the return of its pre-war members from active service.

The ACT was, it is clear, fearful that an influx of new technicians would lead to a glut of labour and subsequent unemployment for its members when war ended. The new category of membership, War Emergency Membership, therefore included newcomers and those whom the ACT saw as having no long-term career in the British film industry. Jeffrey Dell the writer and director, then at Two Cities, was different: he was well established and given membership.¹ Similarly the 'dubbing expert' Karl Heinz Frank, who was working at Anglo American Film Corporation, was signed up, although he only had two sponsors, one of whom was Sidney Cole, and an annotation, 'Ivor Montagu will sign.'² Hence, well into the war it was possible for those who were not Johnny-come-latelys to become members: the Hungarian scenic artist Joseph Bato and the Polish cameraman Jan Sikorsky were signed up. Bato, who was working at MGM-British in October 1943 and had 'worked in film production' since 1940, was sponsored by Vincent Korda, Paul Sheriff, and Carmen Dillon.³ Sikorsky was similarly sponsored by colleagues, the cine-photographers

1 AfM No.6167, 5 July 1944.

2 AfM No.3727.

3 AfM No. 5685. Vincent Korda, although considered 'commercial' by Edward Carrick, *Designing for Motion Pictures*, London, 1969, p. 39, encouraged a number of fledgling cinema art directors, including the young Ken Adam, a refugee from Germany at the age of 13, whom he recommended to first study architecture. Adam's models included Alfred Junge and the Russian opera designer, George Wakhevich. The two films which influenced him most were *Caligari* and *Ivan the Terrible*. His designs for the Bond films, he describes as 'spectacles for the 20th. Century,' which suggest other European influences; interview with author, 4 Aug. 1986; *Screen*

Robert Krasker and Jack Hillyard. He had been in the industry since 15 August 1931 working at Denham Laboratories on a miserable salary of £27 per month.¹ Yet again, the Polish national Eugène Werner who was working as a cameraman at Pathé Gazette for a salary just above the union minimum rate, £13 per week, and who had, George Elvin noted, been 'unconditionally landed', was favoured with membership. But he had already been in the industry for eight years.²

For others it was a different story; they were to become the War Emergency Members, the film industry's equivalent to the Women's Land Army. The young, Yorkshire-born, Kenneth Annakin, who had had a varied career as a salesman, an actor, and a journalist in New Zealand before the war,³ James Julian Maclaren-Ross, then starting as a scriptwriter at Strand Co. Ltd,⁴ the Polish-born Cyril Arapov who had been in Britain since 1919 and had been the official photographer to the Markova Dolin Ballet Company in the mid-1930s, all fell into this category. Arapov had joined Strand Films as a stills photographer and in May 1942 became an assistant cameraman with the princely wage of £3 per week.⁵ It was the same for the Austrian architect William Kellner who had been in Britain since 1936. He found that the war had put an end to his hope of erecting buildings, and after a period of internment in 1940, had emerged, ironically, to become an assessor for the War Damage Commission until, in 1942 he found poorly-paid work in the art department of Gaumont-British.⁶ Emergency and Temporary memberships were on offer for the

International, 12 Feb. 1977. But Vincent Korda also paved the way for the Russian born Paul Sheriff and Hein Heckroth.

1 AfM No. 5418. He joined ACT on 3 February, 1943.

2 AfM No. 6840. In England, he had worked at OFIC FRENCZ, Ministry of Information.

3 AfM WEM No. 4332. He was invalided out of the RAF and joined Verity Films, the documentary unit. He had been in the film business six weeks and was earning £5. 13s 2d per week.

4 AfM No. 5366, 2 Oct. 1943. Julian Maclaren-Ross writes cynically, but hilariously, about his film experiences at Strand in *Memoirs of the Forties*, Harmondsworth, 1984, pp. 118-134.

5 Kyril Arapov. AfM WEM No.4277.

6 AfM WEM No.4914. Maurice Carter was his sponsor.

majority of exiles: Eva Guiller who was working at Technicolor,¹ the 38 year old Czechoslovakian photographer Eric Verlin who started working in the cutting rooms of the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Foreign Office in January 1944,² and a young Polish refugee Ludwika Krakowska,³ who was working as an assistant editor and film librarian at the Film section of the Polish Ministry of Information, came without sponsors and was given temporary status. These are simply examples.

ACT became even more cautious towards the end of the war even in relation to better known figures and Josef Ambor the Austrian lighting cameraman, although he came with the impeccable sponsorship of Wolfgang Suschitzky then cinematographer at Data Film Unit⁴, the composer Ernst H. Meyer at Halas-Batchelor Cartoon Films, Ltd. and Fred Weiss, the Vienna-born editor who was working at Grand National,⁵ fared no better in December 1945. As with Hein Heckroth who entered the industry on Gabriel Pascal's *Caesar and Cleopatra*, he was given only War Emergency Membership.⁶ The union was, once more, trying to control entry.

The protective policy which the ACT pursued can be seen clearly in a number of cases and there were seeming inconsistencies.⁷ The post-war adage that it was

1 AfM WEM No.5471. An assistant in positive control, she was working on an hourly rate of 1s 9 1 2d.

2 AfM Temporary WEM No.5856. He had changed his name from Wurmfeld to Verlin to make it sound less German.

3 AfM WEM No. 5935.

4 Paul Rotha gave Suschitzky, a photo-journalist, his first film work as an unpaid assistant to Paul Burnford at Strand Films; he took him on again in 1943. His first film as cameraman was *Life Begins Again* (MoI 19434, dir. Donald Alexander).

5 AfM WEM No. 8704. Before the war, he had worked for Selendphon-Film, Vienna, where he had been a member of the Union of Austrian Film Technicians and Artists. It did not help him much as far as the ACT went.

6 AfM WEM No. 6719. He was earning £25 per week as costume designer.

7 Many applicants had no previous experience in the film industry. These included Dragutin Domac, a 28 year old Yugoslav, who had been working as a cameraman for the Royal Yugoslav Government's film unit, Staairstoo, from 1 March 1943, at £57 per month. He had previously only worked with film as an amateur. Under the circumstances the ACT could have been expected to offer WEM, but, perhaps through oversight, no qualifications were attached. It was the same for Kathe David, a 17 year old German-born secretary at Technicolor Ltd. in early 1944, who was receiving £2.10s. a week plus 14 8d cost of living bonus. The older, divorced Eva Guiller, a

impossible to get a job in the the film business unless one held a union ticket and impossible to get a union ticket without a job, finds its roots at this time. ACT which had always sought to control and restrict entry into the industry, now saw its opportunity. Its justifications were various but, most importantly it attempted to protect the employment of existing members.

The clearest evidence that nothing had changed for the ACT can be seen in the case of the ex-Yugoslavian film editor Albert Haymsen, who was currently working as a van driver. Haymsen had worked in Berlin and Vienna since 1922 for companies which included Super Film Productions Ltd. and Fellner and Somlo Ltd.¹ Fellner, by this time, was dead but the producer, Josef Somlo, who had employed him 'mainly as an editor' wrote on his behalf to George Elvin² describing Haymsen as 'A refugee from Nazi Oppression, born in Belgrade, Yugoslavia...and as I know that there is such a great shortage of Film Editors, I wonder whether you could help him get back into the Film Trade'. Somlo, anxious to help an old colleague, wanted to know whether an application would be accepted as he would like to use him on his next production. He had not worked as an editor for some time and 'would be willing to consider a job as Assistant-Editor'. Haymsen, a married man of 49 years of age sent an anxious accompanying letter with his application. On the surface Elvin responded favourably to Somlo: 'It is not our policy to oppose applications for membership of our Association from refugees from Nazi oppression, and we have no objection to them working in the British Film Industry provided there are no experienced

Russian-born German, who was also working at Technicolor, but on an hourly rate of 1 9 1 2d per hour in August 1943, was, however, only granted WEM.

1 He had been a member of the appropriate Austrian trade union in Vienna, Verband öster. Film techniker, Gewerkschaft öster. Filmschaffende. Fellner and Somlo became Felson-Film der UFA in 1924. In England Somlo joined a succession of companies: Fanfare Pictures (a £2 000 company), Victor Saville Productions (producing *Storm in a Teacup*), G&S (in 1938, with Rank and C. M. Woolf) to film Gilbert and Sullivan operas, Two Cities (in 1946, when Sasha Galperson left). of which he became joint Managing director.

2 Somlo to Elvin, 13 July 1942.

technicians unemployed' ¹ Haymsen was given War Emergency Membership although, in the short run he was unable to find work in the industry and remained a van driver, until in June 1944 he rejoined when Somlo did, indeed, employ him as an assistant editor at BCFC. The casuistry of Elvin's reply reveals conclusively that the position of the ACT remained uninfluenced by the war or the situation in which the refugee might find himself. Its long-term interest lay within the protectionist policies which it had mapped out in the early 1930s.

Yet, as the war drew to an end, George Elvin was to write in *Kine*

The trade union movement can never be accused of narrow nationalism. Its whole basis is international in outlook.. That is one reason...why there is misunderstanding...on ACT's policy concerning the employment of technicians from other countries in the British film industry....British technicians have had good reason to become a little embittered particularly in the few years just prior to the outbreak of war when they found themselves unemployed and their jobs taken by technicians from America and the Continent. Some of these were...considerably less skilled than the British technician they replaced or were 'has-beens' technicians with a past but no future....The fault for this lies largely...with the producer who was fool enough to be caught.²

Ludicrously, Elvin continues that the General Council

has initiated discussions and correspondence with the appropriate organisations in the countries concerned, or, in the case of countries temporarily occupied by the Nazis, with such Government and film contacts as could be found.... I am confident little difficulty will arise to prevent conclusion of mutually satisfactory agreements with all concerned as soon as our Allies return to their own countries and re-establish their native industries. As far as America is concerned.... ³

This extraordinary comment reasserts the ACT's pre-war position and makes it clear that its policy towards foreign technicians had not been modified. The unnaturalized refugee from Nazism, now that the war was coming to an end, was simply a foreigner again. It reveals that restriction remained the centre-piece of ACT policy and that temporary membership was simply an *ad hoc* stop-gap, which had little to do with helping the refugee. In fact, it looked forward to him returning home.

¹ AfM; letter 16 July 1942; WEM No. 4297.

² KW, 11 Jan. 1945.

³ Ibid.

The Feature Directors and Associate Producers Section and the Case of Rudolph Cartier

The most instructive example of the ACT's restrictive approach to foreigners can be seen in the way in which it dealt with Rudolph Cartier, who had, subject to a MoL permit, been offered the opportunity to produce and direct *Corridor of Mirrors*, an adaptation of a novel by Chris Massie, in 1944. Cartier, who was not to become familiar to British audiences until the 1950s when he began his successful career in BBC television, had pursued a rising career in Berlin from 1929-33 as Rudolph Katscher, collaborating with Egon Eis on a number of film scripts for thrillers.¹ In 1932 he directed Gustaf Gründgens in *Teilnehmer antwortet nicht* [Subscriber is not replying] and the following year in Vienna, the Nazis having taken over in Germany, he directed the bi-lingual produced by Sam Spiegel's own company, *Unsichtbare Gegner Les Raquins* [Invisible Opponents] with Oscar Homolka and Peter Lorre in the German version.² He arrived in Britain via Paris on 30 September 1935 with a one month visa to work on a film about Dame Nellie Melba for Spiegel but nothing came of it,³ and he struggled, working variously for Walter Mycroft at BIPC on adaptations

¹ *Universal Film Lexicon*, London, 1932. Together Eis and Katscher wrote: *Der Tiger*, *Schuß im Tonfilmstudio* [Shot in a Sound Studio], *Der Greifer* [The Killer], *Salto Mortale*, which was directed by A. E. Dupont, *Der Zinker*, from the Edgar Wallace story *The Squeaker*, *D-Zug 13 hat Verspätung* [Train No. 13 is Delayed], *Täter Gecuscht* [Assassin Wanted], *Schuß im Morgengrauen* [Shot at Dawn], all of which were produced by Alfred Zeisler. Katscher had studied architecture, but successfully entered a script competition and went to Berlin.

² *Unsichtbare Gegner* was a Pan Films production with Sascha-Film Industrie; the producer, director, stars, photographer and the editor, Rudi Fehr were all in England within two years. All but Katscher went to Hollywood. Spiegel with Otto Preminger, left Vienna for Paris in 1935 and Katscher followed. But he found no work and when Spiegel left for London he again followed, see also Andrew Sinclair, *Spiegel*, London, 1987, p. 21 ff.

³ Spiegel produced one film in Britain — a bilingual — *The Invader*, for British and Commonwealth Films and MGM distribution which was directed by Adrian Brunel, photographed and edited respectively by Eugen Schüfftan and Rudi Fehr (in one of its versions) two of Katscher's colleagues from Vienna, who were then in London. It starred Buster Keaton, down on

which were not made, for Anatole de Grunwald and others, receiving financial assistance from the Jewish refugee organisation at Woburn House, and loans from his old UFA friend Emeric Pressburger.¹

Interned at Huyton from 1940-42, by which time both parents had murdered by the Nazis,² and himself unfit for any military service³, he emerged to join the Ministry of Information as a script consultant to Ivor Montagu working on an unlikely story of a Russian attempt to take over India, hardly the sort of thing in which Montagu would have seen much mileage.⁴

As we have seen the expanding influence which the ACT was enjoying with the Ministry led it to encourage other categories of film workers to join the union. Producers who were union members, it argued, would be more sympathetic to its aspirations. Emeric Pressburger and Isadore Goldsmith for example became ACT members. Pressburger had joined as early as September 1941 with the impeccable sponsorship of the editors David Lean and Sidney Cole⁵, Goldsmith in July 1944.⁶ The enhanced situation encouraged the union to revive the concept of industrial unionism and a Feature Directors and Associate Producers Section was formed. At its

his luck, and was a complete failure. Low, p. 195-6, writes of it as 'A lamentable example' of the the 'conspicuously bad' British films which MGM distributed at the time. Brunel blamed the producer but Low writes that Keaton 'walked sadly through a series of facetious gags typical of Brunel's own brand of humour'. According to Sinclair the budget was £30 000 and Keaton was paid £3000, none of which Spiegel had. The company went into liquidation. Spiegel found himself in court on 17 March 1936, charged with forging a guarantee. The case was eventually thrown out, but on a second charge of failing, as an alien, to register a change of address, he was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment and recommended for deportation. See *KW* 14 May, 1936.

1 Rudolph Cartier, interview with author 31 Oct. 1988

2 Cartier, interview with author, 31 Oct. 1988. His father, an Hungarian silk merchant, had been killed on Kristallnacht in 1938. His mother was murdered in Auschwitz in 1942.

3 He contracted polio at the age of sixteen

4 Rudolph Cartier to author, 21 Jan. 1989. He changed his name to Cartier in 1942 to protect himself; his UFA secretary had written from Austria via France to warn him that his name was on a Gestapo death list. A cache of arms belonging to a friend, a member of a left wing armed group, had been found in the basement of Katscher's Berlin apartment.

5 AfM No 3593.

6 AfM No 6090. Goldsmith, né Goldschmidt, sometimes Goldsmidt or Goldsmid.

first meeting on 6 October 1944 it discussed its response 'to the Ministry of Labour in connection with the application for a labour permit by Rudolph Cartier to work as a film director and producer'.¹

The potential importance of this short-lived section of the ACT can be judged by the large attendance at the first meeting and the presence of its senior officers and 22 members.² Sidney Cole, J. J. Croydon, Thorold Dickinson, Maurice Elvey, and Marcel Varnel, three of whom had been active in pre-war deputations to the MoL, became its elected committee. Their views had not changed. The matter was passed to Committee which met on the evening of 13 October 1944. Emeric Pressburger and Brian Desmond Hurst, Cartier's sponsors, had been 'asked to attend'. This grisly episode was a no-win situation for Cartier.

Cartier had been invited to state his case and to respond to questions. Subsequently, it was decided to check the information he had given. J. J. Croydon was to 'check with Cavalcanti for information regarding' his work in France. 'Marcel Varnel would check regarding *Les Raquin*' and 'Mr. P.C. Samuel would check with Mr. Ditcham regarding the terms of the contract offered to Mr. Cartier'. By this time, the Committee's mind was made up and it proposed to inquire of 'certain Director members' if they were in a position to direct the film.³

The inevitable decision was taken by the Committee on 2 October 1944.⁴ It recommended 'that ACT should not support the application for a Labour permit to work as a *Director* (sic), but it had no objection to him working as a Producer and/or Writer, provided he guarantees finance and distribution and employs a Director who is a member of the Association.' These quite ludicrous conditions were transparently restrictive and intended to prevent incursions into the industry by foreigners and non-members when employment could go to ACT members. It compelled Cartier to

1 FD & APS Minutes 6 Oct. 1944.

2 The officers were the President, Anthony Asquith, the General Secretary, George Elvin and the Studio Vice-President, Mr. C. Wheeler.

3 Minutes: Committee Meeting, FD & APS, 13 Oct. 1944.

4 Minutes: Committee Meeting, FD & APS, 2 Oct. 1944

employ a director who was a member of the ACT, a condition it could not enforce with any producer not in need of a labour permit.

The decision was reported to the Section on 3 November 1944. The MoL 'had acted on the Committee's advice'. These were heady days for ACT. Two years later at the Section's meeting on 1 November 1946 it again found a way of excluding him from membership.¹ 'The General Council had followed the section's advice' and 'Mr. Cartier had not been accepted for membership.' Although Cartier had been in Britain since the mid-thirties he was still considered a foreign artist by the Union. ACT added, with some regret, that the BFPA-ACT machinery for foreign directors should operate and 'If he was one of the quota (of foreign directors) he could not be prevented from working'. When it did relent he was still not allowed to work as a director, only as a producer. *Corridor of Mirrors* (Apollo 1948) was eventually made in Paris with Terence Young as its director. It had taken four years.

The Section promptly set out to establish qualifications for entry into this 'special section'. It was designed to create a category of directors and associate producers who were sympathetic to union ambitions, especially where the employment of foreign workers was concerned, and would reap contingent benefits for the employment of trade union writers and other category workers who were not universally unionised. Membership was subject to annual review by committee, primary consideration was given to a member who had been working, and it was restricted to those who had 'completed two feature films' although, probably at the insistence of Dickinson, an exception was possible if an applicant had worked on a film of 'special merit'. With these criteria two stalwarts of the ACT Ivor Montagu and Adrian Brunel were excluded 'for the time being', whilst the producer Isadore Goldsmith and the directors David Lean and Herbert Mason, farcically, had to supply evidence of their past records.² Evidence of this kind does not seem to have been sought from 37 others which included Anthony Asquith, Richard Vernon, Charles Crichton, Max Greene,

¹ Minutes: D & PS.

² Minutes: Committee Meeting FD & APS, 19 Jan. 1945.

Emeric Pressburger, John Paddy Carstairs, R.J. Minney, Thorold Dickinson and Anatole de Grunwald. Henry Cornelius, presumably on the strength of *Painted Boats* (1945) on which he had been associate producer, was to become eligible for membership of the Section after the completion of one more picture¹ and the 'special concession' was implemented for Laurence Olivier 'in view of the outstanding qualities of *Henry V*'. A decision, which went unminuted, to decline membership to John Argyle because of lack of recent work was subsequently reversed 'as a special case on account of his National Service'.²

It agreed to recommend a labour permit on behalf of the Rank Organisation for the American film director Wesley Ruggles 'provided it was for one picture only'. But for the associate producer William 'Buster' Collier, and the Production Manager, Fred Leahy, it recommended 'that permits should not be granted'.³ As it turned out permits were not refused and Ruggles was to be allowed to argue for them when he arrived in the country.⁴ The ACT and Ruggles met at the MoL where it settled that Collier could come as a personal assistant, but that a British associate producer would be employed in place of Leahy, but then Ruggles went ahead and publicly criticized the union.⁵ The ACT were bitter and eventually outmanœuvred, but tried to salvage the little they could. Later, it acidulously recorded that it 'should not be prepared to entertain [Collier] working in this country for the reason that he did not fulfil his promises to the ACT whilst engaged on the production of *London Town*.' It could protest, but in reality it was as impotent to stop these incursions as it had been ten years before.⁶

1 Cornelius was an early member of ACT, membership no. 696, joining almost as soon as he arrived in Britain in 1935, employed at this point by Gaiety Films. Jack Cardiff and Dan Birt were two of his sponsors. His membership lapsed when he was working in South Africa during the war, for the Film Department of Union Unity, part of the South African propaganda services, and he had to pay a penalty, with a double entrance fee, on his re-application. His new membership number, given on 14 Oct. 1944, was 6387 His sponsors were Sidney Cole, Basil Dearden, Robert Hamer, and Charles Hasse.

2 Minutes: FD & APS, 2 March 1945.

3 Minutes: FD & APS, 3 Nov. 1944.

4 Minutes: FD & APS, 2 Feb. 1945.

5 KW 5 April 1945.

6 Minutes: D & PS 2 Nov.1945.

It was not the first indication that the ACT was not to be in a position to effect production decisions. The Ministry was already returning to normal operation and had reactivated the procedures which it had devised before the war, that of each case being assessed on its merits; ACT was already beginning to lose its illusory authority. 'Two years ago,' it noted in its annual report, 'the British Film Producers Association shared our views. Their change of policy is to be regretted.... Until recently we have had the full support of the Ministry of Labour and no application for a permit had been met if it had been opposed by the General Council...experience in recent cases indicates a less strong attitude.'¹

The Section remained fiercely protective however. On 2 March 1945 it considered the cases of Duvivier and Feyder, 'the former to work for Korda and the latter to work for Two Cities Films.'² With the war virtually over old and resentful sentiments re-emerged and devices for blocking foreign employment in Britain began to emerge. British directors would, it thought, be more sympathetic to British technicians. Not only was it possible for 'a slight rearrangement of schedules' to create a situation at Denham whereby Ruggles, Feyder and Duvivier 'would all be on the floor' at the same time, so that 'not a single British director would be employed,' but the Section sought to delay any recommendations to the MoL by suggesting that the Union first sought confirmation that the European directors 'were neither collaborators nor that there was a need for them in their own country'. Of course it was ludicrous, especially as Duvivier had been in Hollywood during the war,³ but with memories of the thirties still clear in their minds the General Council was asked to seek information from the Ministry as to which British directors Korda planned to use for his films and to look for a minimum time limit before a director would be allowed back to direct a second film in Britain. It was like the old days; a permit had been granted to Duvivier, it was

1 Annual Report 1944-45..

2 Minutes: FD & APS, 2 March 1945. Duvivier was wanted for *Anna Karenina* (LFP 1948); the Feyder project was abandoned, but not due to ACT pressure.

3 He directed *Lydia* for Korda, *Tales of Manhattan* for TCF, with Sam Spiegel producing, and *The Imposter* (which he also produced) for Universal, in the US.

reported to the section, a decision on Feyder had yet to be reached.¹ The incursions now, however, were to be mostly from America and it was concern over the Hollywood technician which took the centre stage.

The Producers Fight Back

The European artist who was working in Britain at the end of the war was no newcomer and was receiving no special concessions. Some had become naturalised in the 1930s; others were about to apply for British citizenship. ACT now turned its attention solely to Americans. An American matte artist was reluctantly, it seems, welcomed to work at Rank 'on the understanding that whilst over here he trained British technicians in his particular job',² but Rank also wanted to introduce an editor 'capable of cutting films for showing in America and other countries'. The ACT was caught in its own logic and wrote to Rank stating that 'there was no single individual Editor who could claim to speak for the whole of America. The solution...was not to send an American editor over here to edit the picture for the American market, but for the film to be taken out to America...[to]...discuss the special editing required for distribution in that country.' The ACT must have assumed that there would be a separate British version of the film cut by one of its members, but there were never any guarantees of this nature on offer. Determined to cut its own throat the section also wanted Natalie Kalmus of Technicolor to return to America. 'Britain had made better colour pictures during the war than had ever been made in Hollywood' and 'they could see no necessity for her stay in this country.'³

Val Guest the director and writer who had worked on *London Town* the first of the films to cause concern to the ACT, reported that the Union's hostility to the producer Hal Wallis bringing 'his own Assistant (whether technical or personal is not yet

¹ Minutes: FD & APS, 6 April 1946.

² Minutes: FD & APS, 2 Nov. 1945.

³ Minutes: FD & APS, 2 Nov. 1945

known) and also a Director, Cameraman, Editor and two actors.’ to produce a film at Paramount-British, had led ‘the film to be indefinitely postponed’.¹ There may, of course, have been other reasons and the ACT’s ‘attitude’ may have provided an excuse for Wallis, but the Section still wanted it made ‘very clear that ACT could see no justification for any of the technicians concerned being brought to the country...there was no shortage of available British technicians’.

Before the war the influx of refugees and exiles of conscience from Europe had, so the Union argued, been a major factor in preventing its members from progressing to responsible positions on major feature films. Now the situation was beginning to repeat itself. Accordingly a meeting was set up with a Committee of BFPA which was attended by J. Arthur Rank, Balcon and Korda to consider the ACT’s views.² The ACT was arguing from a weak position. The associate producer Philip Samuel reported that ‘the Producers, although willing to go a long way towards preventing the entry of foreign cameramen, editors etc., stipulated that as far as directors were concerned they reserved to themselves the right to bring in anyone they wished’. This was the ostensible position which already existed but the ACT was always discovering that producers did not consider themselves bound by even these limitations, and had to put a brave face on it. It agreed with the producers that the existing ‘machinery already operating whereby the Ministry of Labour consulted ACT before granting permits to foreign technicians was quite satisfactory’. ACT had returned to its pre-war position when its recommendations had been frequently, even generally, ignored.

Its delegations to the MoL before the war had fallen on sympathetic ears, but they were ears which recognised that producers were taking financial risks and could not be expected to employ technicians in whom they had no confidence. The fact that British technicians did emerge to work on important British feature films after the war had little or nothing to do with ACT pressures on the Ministry or on producers like Rank,

1 Minutes: Directors, Producers and Associate Producers Section Minutes 2 Nov. 1945.

2 Minutes: D & PS, 7 June 1946; *The Daily Film Renter*, 6 May 1946.

Korda or Balcon. The ACT had always tried to present the case that British technicians were being excluded in favour of foreign workers, who were invariably more expensive and possibly less skilled, but the argument as the MoL realized was a thin one. Throughout the 30s and early 40s, however, technicians had been receiving training alongside established figures. The cine-photographer Erwin Hillier makes the point that in spite of all the jealous resentments, sometimes from surprising sources, training in Britain would not have existed at all had it not been for the émigré in the 1930s.¹ Hillier, who had been keen to learn the trade, had begun his career as an assistant cameraman to Fritz Arno Wagner on Fritz Lang's *M* in Berlin in 1931 and remained a camera operator alongside cine-photographers including Charles van Enger, Curt Courant, Jan Stallich, Günther Krampf, and Ernest Palmer for ten years before himself progressing to director of photography on *Lady from Lisbon* (British National- Shaftesbury, 1942).

The Section conceded that on the 'question of foreign Directors' the ACT would be involved in 'a hard fight', but when in the Summer of 1946 'six American technicians' arrived unannounced at Denham to work for RKO ² and the ACT had neither been consulted nor informed it was a cruel blow and just the kind of thing it had feared. Faced with a *fait accompli* ACT could only attempt to save face and to struggle for a reciprocal arrangement with RKO, Hollywood. Correspondence from America confirmed details of this one-sided transaction. The director George Stevens of the Screen Directors and Production Managers Guild, Hollywood, cabled Edward Dmytryk at RKO Denham that the Board 'will discuss plans to open negotiations'. With such phrasing, there was clearly no hope of realistic mediation for the ACT. Peter Rathvon of RKO was even more discouraging when in a cable to Adrian Scott at RKO Denham, he wrote 'RKO will be agreeable to any arrangements made by Rank for sending four technicians here to be employed *if suitable arrangements can be made with American unions*, otherwise to be observers' (my ital.). The message

1 Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April 1987.

2 Minutes: D & PS, 5 July 1946.

was not lost on the ACT; there would be no Hollywood employment for its technicians, but it thought 'a guarantee had been received' that the four technicians would be used on RKO's next production at Denham.¹ There was however no indication that one was being planned at all. In effect the strategy which the ACT had adopted toward the foreign technician was overtaken by events. The European technicians and artists who had been in Britain before and during the war were now either in America or applying for British citizenship. ACT stood little chance of restricting American intrusions into the British film industry in the industrial climate of the late 1940s.

As we have seen the claim that the ACT welcomed refugee members during the war can only be accepted with considerable reservations. Shortage of labour and the desire to extend its influence was central to its thinking, but it had not allowed for changes in circumstances. It is certainly true that there was an influx of members, many of whom were from Germany or occupied countries at this time, but membership which was for the most part in lower grades and intended to be restricted to the duration of the war. ACT appears on the surface to have been more flexible in its approach to the employment of non-British technicians but it restricted its assistance, firstly so that it did not conflict with the employment of its pre-war members and secondly so that there was no assurance of continued employment after the war. Its policy towards foreign technicians had not changed.

It should be no surprise that production in the film industry remained in turmoil after the war. Throughout the 1930s there had been no overall concept of a British cinema and the film industry operated in exactly the same way as other elements of bourgeois society. It exhibited the same kind of foresight and forward-planning as other British enterprises, which in effect means that it failed to plan at all. The inability of British business to grasp the political consequences of Britain's domestic and foreign policies finds its reflection in the film industry which, because of its fear of

¹ Ibid.

unemployment, was similarly dominated by self-interest and chauvinism which led it to seek short-term solutions. Michael Balcon rather guiltily noted that none of the films of the thirties confronted the difficulties of the political situation but, as Jeffrey Richards has observed in another context, this was precisely their function in social terms.¹ ACT's protectionist policy towards foreign workers in the British film industry, unsavoury as it was, was only part of this complex pattern of political reaction.

¹ See, for example, Jeffrey Richards, 'The British Board of Film Censors', *HJF*, Vol 2 No.1, March 1982.

PART FOUR

The BBC as an Alternative Source of Employment for Film Artists

Introduction

‘The war began in London’ writes Robert Hewison ‘with a speech on the wireless by Neville Chamberlain, a thunderstorm and an air-raid warning, but the immediate holocaust expected by the Londoners who had seen the film of H. G. Wells’s *The Shape of Things to Come* failed to materialize. Instead conditions approximated more to Richmal Crompton’s *William and the ARP*.’¹ The myth of bureaucratic eccentricity is part of the nutrient from which British comedy of the 1940s derived its strength. Norman Longmate writes that the introit for *The Daily Service* with which broadcasting began on Monday 28 August was *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, whilst its hymn was *A Safe Stronghold Our God Is Still*.² Angus Calder, on the other hand, writes of the ‘spirit of the People’s War’ which was well represented by the BBC, uniquely fitted to serve as the official voice of a united people at war.’³

Yet as we shall see the BBC, in spite of gestures towards popular taste and its apparent openness, was instrumental in enforcing the myth of a united and cohesive nation. Documentation at its Written Archives discloses less a degree of increased democratization, more a confirmation in the value of its own prescriptive judgements and tastes. Although numerous refugees and exiles from Europe, many of them from the film industry, worked for the Corporation during the war notably in its Foreign Service, the image of a cohesive nation was partly achieved by a co-ordinated and

1 Robert Hewison, *Under Siege*, London, 1977, p. 9ff.

2 Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then*, London, 1971, pp. 15-16. The hymn is by Luther.

3 Calder, *The People’s War*, London, 1971, p. 413.

hierarchic policy which allowed little dissent. The BBC was not to be a haven for émigrés nor an institution where their particular cultural contribution was much valued, except in so far as it was directed by British hands and contributed to the war effort. Their value was that they spoke or wrote in German and could contribute to the Foreign Service. After 1945 when broadcasting gradually returned to normal émigrés found they were not needed or wanted to anything like the same degree.

Foreign Broadcasting

Gerard Mansell observes that there is no conclusive evidence to show whether the initiative for suggesting a foreign language response to ‘the German and Italian radio menace’ came from the BBC or from the British Government. ‘Conducting propaganda by radio was not thought to be a proper activity for the BBC to engage in, and...there were considerable reservations at a high level inside the corporation over the very principle of broadcasting in foreign languages even if the material broadcast was free of propaganda.’¹

On 18 May 1936, virtually simultaneously with Hitler’s remilitarization of the Rhineland and the fall of Addis Ababa to the Italian army in Ethiopia,² an internal committee recommended that the BBC might start broadcasting in Spanish and Portuguese to Latin-America, in German French and Dutch to their colonies or ex-colonies, and in a number of less widely-used languages.³

A damning indictment of the Government’s lack of preparation for war took place on 27 September 1938. Two days before the Munich Conference between Chamberlain and Hitler the Foreign Office requested the BBC to provide facilities to transmit German language versions of a broadcast the Prime Minister was to make that evening and undertook to provide speakers and translators, but ‘later that day it

1 Gerard Mansell, *Let the Truth Be Told*, London, 1982, pp. 41-42.

2 Ibid., pp. 42-43.

3 This committee followed the Ullswater Committee which sat in the Summer of 1935.

transpired that it would be unable to do so in the case of French or German.’¹ A frantic search led to the first broadcasts to Germany, France and Italy by the German artist and cartoonist G. Walter Goetz; other language versions had to be covered by BBC announcers and other English personalities. It took a further year for broadcasts to Poland and Czechoslovakia to begin.² It was not until after the Germans had invaded Scandinavia on 9 April 1940, only a month before Churchill took over as Prime Minister, that broadcasts to Denmark and Norway started, although Churchill when he was First Lord of the Admiralty would have preferred ‘a policy of complete silence.’³ Nevertheless, in spite of a slow start, additional foreign language units were speedily created,⁴ the BBC finally broadcast in 77 foreign languages and the BBC staff grew from 4 309 to 11 216. Film artists worked in many of the Overseas Sections during the war.

The government considered a variety of options to exert ministerial control over the BBC; Duff Cooper when Minister of Information considered a ‘Broadcasting Council’ to strengthen his hand.⁵ A few months later the Government was proposing to take the BBC over.⁶ However, when the Director General Sir Frederick Ogilvie saw R. A. Butler at the Foreign Office on 25 November 1940, ‘in connection with the alleged indiscretions’ in BBC news coverage, Butler recognised that taking over the BBC ‘would bring upon Government directly the many embarrassments which we shouldered at present. He said that the BBC was a microcosm of the problems of

1 Mansell, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

2 On 7 and 8 Sept. 1939, respectively.

3 In 1935, Reith and the Director General of the Post Office had agreed that the BBC Board would go ‘out of commission’ during a war and be directly controlled by the Government. See Asa Briggs, *BBC: The First Fifty Years*, Oxford, 1985. Churchill, consistent with his handling of ‘censorship’ situations towards film, *Ships Without Wings*, *The Next of Kin*, and *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, for example, and towards the newspaper the *Daily Mirror*, would have preferred this.

4 Among these was the Cypriot Service which started on 16 Sept. 1940 and survived until 3 Sept. 1951. Its Assistant for almost all of its existence was the future film director Michael Cacoyannis, who was to make *Stella* (1955), E1 625.

5 HoC Debates, 11 June 1940.

6 R.34 258, Ogilvie, Record of Interviews, 22 Nov. 1940.

efficient government in a democracy'¹ A solution was eventually found; PWE² was announced to the House of Commons on 11 September and ran the Corporation with guidance from the Ministerial Committee, chaired by Anthony Eden with Duff Cooper and Hugh Dalton.³ By July 1941 the Ministry took 'full day-to-day editorial control of the BBC for both initiative and censorship...the Board of Governors [to] stand as umpires and sureties to Parliament for the spirit in which the BBC is conducted.'⁴

The French and German Services

Émigrés looked for work especially in the French and German Sections of the Overseas Services. The former consisted of less than twenty people who often worked under pseudonyms: the French actor and assistant director Jacques Brunius, the composer Francis Chagrin and occasionally Alberto Cavalcanti were the only film-makers.⁵ The tiny lower-ground floor room 41 of Bush House, in which they worked,

1 Ibid.

2 Political Warfare Executive was a temporary wartime department, the successor to two previously secret organisations, Department Electra House and Special Operations 1. It operated under the cover of a non-secret section of the Foreign Office, the Political Intelligence Dept. PID was closed in 1943 but PWE continued to use its name.

3 Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *Comes the Reckoning*, London, 1947, p. 127, explains that '...there were serious defects in the internal organisation. Control was vested in three Ministers. As Chairman Mr. Eden had the final word on policy, but he had no propaganda machine of his own. Dr. Dalton controlled the original department of enemy propaganda. Mr. Bracken [who replaced Duff Cooper] was responsible to Parliament for all broadcasting. Dalton assumed that he would continue to be solely responsible for his section. As a counter-move Mr. Bracken asserted his rights over the BBC.'

4 'Secret', extract from Prime Minister's Minute, Approved by Cabinet, n. d. but c. July 1941. Bracken insisted that the Controller (Overseas) be moved and on a restructuring of the overseas services 'into two branches, in charge of officers of the Corporation acceptable to the Ministry and the Board,' See letter from Powell to Bracken, 18 Sept., 1941, R 34/258. Powell was Chairman of the BBC. The Planning and Broadcast Committee met daily to assess the success of previous broadcasts and to decide how forthcoming broadcasts should develop.

5 Chagrin was Roumanian by birth and Cavalcanti, Brazilian. Both entered the film industry in Paris. Chagrin had composed for British documentaries since 1937 and for a couple of feature films, one of which was *The Silent Battle* (Pinebrook, 1939, dir. Herbert Mason) and his BBC career began in June 1941.

was convenient for two but as many as fourteen people packed into it prior to a broadcast.¹ They worked ‘in a kind of rockery atmosphere of chatter and debate,’ which ‘may not be desirable, but that is the way they work best, and there is nothing to do about it.’²

Jacques Brunius as a member of the theatrical company Groupe Octobre, has long been associated with Jean Renoir. In Britain he was soon in touch with Cavalcanti at the GPO Film Unit and showing his interest in working for the BBC. N. G. Luker noted that he ‘and Cavalcanti are both working in this country on French versions of some of our documentary films. I should think they are worth keeping in mind for one of your programmes during a slack week. I can get hold of them fairly quickly....’³ Brunius’s versatility attracted him to Michel Saint-Denis the theatre director, now working for the French Section as Head of Programmes⁴ and by July a few days after the fall of France Brunius had joined him as Programme Assistant, with the responsibility to ‘concentrate entirely on rewriting, on presentation and on the production of material already prepared...in the Editorial Unit.’ Brunius using the pseudonym of Borel presented sections of the short-lived *Ici la France*⁵ on ‘Albert Roussel’, ‘Theophile Gautier et Charles Baudelaire’, ‘Lafayette, and Couperin’. By the end of the year he was offered a contract. He received twelve guineas for himself and his co-writer for ‘the *Alexander Dumas* feature programme and the five minute talk “Evocation de Paris”’. Throughout 1940 he did not query fees.⁶ After that he was on a salary.⁷

1 R13 147.

2 R13 147., FSO to Director European Service, 19 March 1941.

3 Luker to Pringle, 1 March 1940.

4 Saint-Denis had been running an actors school in Islington before joining the BEF, but looked to versatility as a major requirement in an artist. He used the name Jacques Duchesne.

5 ‘Ici la France’ had been inaugurated on 19 June 1940 by the French Ambassador in London, M. Charles Corbin. General de Gaulle had given his first broadcast appeal to the French people the day before. See Mansell, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-146.

6 Brunius, Artist, letter from Jacques Brunius, 2 Aug. 1940. .

7 After the war, with Brunius once more a freelance artist, there was — as with many artists who worked for the BBC — much dissatisfaction over fees.

In July 1940 the French section started a conversation piece *Les Trois Amis* in which Saint-Denis appeared as the voice of balance and common sense. Shortly afterwards starting on 1 September it transmitted another *La Petite Académie*, in which Brunius played the part of the president of an imaginary body which was to revise the French dictionary in accordance with official Vichy or German propaganda.¹ Another, *Courrier de France* broadcast by Brunius between January 1941 and July 1943 dealt with correspondence from France. Many of the letters were carefully examined in the BBC's Intelligence Reports and revealed the changing climate in France, from the disappointment at the failure of the British to open a 'second front' to evidence of a growing resistance movement throughout the country.² As the war swung in favour of the allies the programme was replaced with *Chronique de France*, which was based on information from other sources including those who had escaped across the Channel and Brunius later observed that 'the closer victory came into view' the more difficult it became to sustain 'our role'.³

Because France was liberated in 1944 the German Service had a longer effective life. It was structured along BBC lines with three departments, News, Features, and Talks. Programmes were written in English and translated separately by each department for production. Until September 1941 German Features was headed by Walter Rilla and included on the staff two Rilla appointees: the German Expressionist poet Karl Otten who had co-written the scenario for George Pabst's *Kameradschaft* (1931) in Germany, and Martin Esslin.⁴ At the end of 1940 there was a 'flare up' of the German Section with Rilla and Carl Brinitzer of the News Department at the

1 Mansell, op. cit., pp. 128-129. Both programmes were grouped, together with others, under the overall title 'Les Français parlent aux Français'.

2 Asa Briggs, *The War of Words*, London, 1970, p. 446.

3 Quoted in Briggs, *Ibid.*, p. 456.

4 Esslin, (né Julius Pereszlenyi) an Austrian, was later Head of the BBC Radio Department and, as an authority on contemporary theatre, became Professor of Drama at Stanford University, California. Otten, who already suffered from poor eyesight, became totally blind in 1946. He was Script Writer, German Programmes, 13 April-1 Nov. 1941.

centre¹ and Richard Crossman at PWE insisted on a reorganisation and expansion which brought the German Section fully integrated into Bush House under Hugh Carleton Greene. Initially it was thought that Rilla was the 'man of necessary outstanding qualifications' to become Chief Producer but Crossman took the opportunity to have him removed. Rilla 'had edited an excellent magazine in Breslau' after WW1² and was a good journalist and producer, but he lacked a grasp of BBC politics, resisted attempts for his unit to co-ordinate with News or News Talks and paid little attention to PWE with the result that even unsuitable items of news were dramatized.³ The end result was that he was replaced by Marius Goring who, although a Sergeant in the 14th Queen's Royal Regiment, had been frequently used by the BBC in an acting capacity.⁴

Goring was hardly in the forces. He had volunteered for intelligence early in 1939 but had been rejected and he subsequently applied for officer training which was not to happen.⁵ The BBC wanted him to complete *The Shadow of the Swastika*, a propaganda series with an audience of ten million people which was to go out

1 13 148 1, memo. 12 December, 1940. Brinitzer wrote about his work in the German Service, *Hier Spricht London*, Hamburg, 1969.

2 *PPB*, 8 Nov., 1954. The magazine was called *Die Erde: Politische und Kulturpolitische Halbmonatsschrift* and had only a short life, from 1919-1920. Walter Rilla had drifted towards the theatre. His debut was in *Femme X* with Rosa Valetti. He worked briefly in the theatre, at Reinhardt, Barnowsky, and Saltenburg theatres but once into films he rarely appeared on stage. In 1937 he wrote to Eric Maschwitz, 'I am in London again.... I would very much like to see you and ask your advice in some matters of very great importance to me,' see letter, Rilla to Maschwitz, 15 Feb. 1937, Artist. He was looking for work and Maschwitz recommended him to Harry Tennant of Theatre Royal, Drury Lane; see letter, Maschwitz to Tennant, 25 Feb. 1937, Artist. *Picturegoer*, 12 Aug. 1939, similarly, described him as having a 'sophisticated and polished charm'.

3 The writer Hans Flesch, for example, had worked for the German Section but was interned in 1940 and, on his release, was unable to get back into the Corporation. On 3 May 1941, he wrote to Berthold Viertel asking for help in leaving Britain. He wrote, it 'is our fight and at the same time it is definitely not, they don't want us, we are suspects and the insularisation of the Exiles (sic) becomes a nightmare', quoted in Sylvia M. Patsch, *Österreichische Schriftsteller im Exil*, Vienna, 1985, p. 278.

4 Goring telegraphed the BBC in response to a request for his services to take part in *Romeo and Juliet* to say that it had been approved. He turned down many offers of stage and film work after he had been seconded to the BBC on 1 July 1941. His salary of £620 per annum was paid to PID who remained his employer.

5 Interview with Marius Goring, 1 Aug. 1990.

fortnightly from 20 June for three months.¹ Bruce Belfrage who sought his exemption claimed to have 'searched the whole of the acting profession for a suitable "Hitler". We recorded many of them and Mr. Goring's voice was far and away the best...it would seriously damage the value of the sequel if he were not available to continue to play the part.'² Goring, a fluent German speaker, was shuffled around. He was asked to work at Woburn Abbey, broadcasting black-propaganda to the enemy, but rejected the idea and was passed to SWE at Electra House. It didn't appeal³ and after discussions with Richard Crossman 'it was decided that I would be best employed in the German Section' of the BBC.⁴ Rilla was transferred to the Drama Department under Val Gielgud, and Karl Otten, 'Rilla's henchman', was sacked,⁵ although Rilla who

1 Actual dates for the six broadcasts, produced by Laurence Gilliam, with music composed and arranged by George Walter (Walter Goehr), were 19 Nov. 1939 - 25 Jan. 1940, see A. L. Lloyd and Igor Vinogradoff, *Shadow of the Swastika*, London, 1940, p.15. The closing words of the series 'Men and women of Germany! Were you born not to live? Were you born to die for Hitlerism?', were spoken quietly, and uncredited, by Lucie Mannheim.

2 Goring, Artist, memo from Bruce Belfrage, 7 May 1940. This had led to the usual confusions, accompanied by the false belief, in some quarters, that it was impossible to obtain deferment for artists once they had registered for military service. The Administration Department of the BBC refused to handle it, but Gielgud was drawn in by Laurence Gilliam and it was eventually sorted out. Goring was to play Hitler more than once.

3 Interview with Marius Goring, op cit. Woburn Abbey was euphemistically called 'The Country' by those involved in black propaganda. Its head was Richard Crossman, but by the Summer of 1941 it was being run by Denis Sefton Delmer who was secretly given equal status. According to Ellic Howe, who was responsible for PWE's black printing unit, *The Black Game*, London, 1982, pp. 96-7, on 'the use of refugees, Delmer always had a low opinion of the BBC staff...but maintained that there were excellent refugees to be used if you knew where to find them.' Two he used were Rudolph Bernaur and Agnes Bernelle.

4 Goring, Artist, Goring to Asst. Director of European Organisation, 15 Dec. 1942.

5 Martin Esslin to author, 24 July 1989. Esslin feels that the British error in such matters was to appoint someone they believed looked like an English gentleman, whereas, in Germany, he would have immediately been recognised as a gigolo type. He, although an appointee of Rilla's, survived because he had inventively used recordings of Hitler's speeches, to Rilla's derision, to reveal their contradictions. 'Esslin became my right hand man and would research Hitler's speeches at the Wiener Library. [He was] brilliant! By taking two different speeches he would show him contradicting himself. One example was *Bombs Over England*. It was just at the time of bombs over Germany,' Marius Goring, interview with author, 1 Aug 1990. Esslin's one adventure into films at this time was the writing of snatches of German dialogue and the supervision of its dubbing for *The Day Will Dawn* (Niksos Film, 1942, dir. Harold French). Otten's wife continued to work in the Transcription Service.

described him as ‘the distinguished German writer’ continued to commission features from him.¹

Goring was put in charge of all German Dramatic Productions and after 23 March 1943 became Productions Supervisor. There was the usual administrative untidiness over salary and title and documentation in the BBC Written Archives suggest that he couldn’t ‘cope with the work involved’. and sought more help,² but Goring remembers it as a wheeze to get Hans Buxsbaum away from working at Woburn Abbey, which he hated, and into the BBC.³ Richard Crossman as German Regional Director lent him Buxsbaum for three months at the beginning of 1942⁴ to produce features; his services were ‘absolutely necessary.’⁵ He remained head of translations for the rest of the war. Whilst the French Service had around twenty members of staff the German service had 104.⁶

Under Goring many subsequently famous and well known people worked for the Service, including the actors Herbert Lom⁷ and Heinrich Fischer, Fritz Wendhausen, Carl Jaffé, Josef Almas, Albert Lieven⁸, Jan van Loewen and Julius Gellner⁹. The

1 Otten, Plays: Rilla to Programme Copyright, 13 Feb. 1942. Otten had been in England since 1934 and ‘left Germany for political reasons’. He ‘got into trouble with the Nazi régime over his political opinions,’ wrote the sympathetic Miss K. Henrey, Near East Section, London Transcription Service, for whom he later wrote the occasional feature. He ‘has been rather skilful in writing very simply and clearly.’ see Otten, Radio Talks, Clump, memo. to Cameron, 3 Nov. 1943. After the war, the mood changed and some of his writing, although his ‘mastery of English and English verse form [are] quite remarkable,’ was considered ‘at once too vague and too heavy’, utilising a type of symbolism ‘so very much of the ’30s’; see Otten, Plays, Baker to Gittings, 10 Feb. 1949. He followed the fate of many, being gradually, ‘written out’ whenever possible, by English writers who were described as ‘expert’. Rilla remained with the Corporation until 6 Oct. 1946, although he continued to take freelance work from it.

2 R13 148 2, 1941, File 1B, Jubb to European Executive, 4 Dec., 1941.

3 Interview with Marius Goring, 1 Aug. 1990.

4 R13 148 2., 1941, Crossman to Goring, 27 Nov. 1941.

5 R13 148 3, Thornton to Taylor, 23 Jan. 1942.

6 71 were paid monthly and 33 were weekly-paid clerical staff.

7 Lom struggled through a range of feeble parts in German army helmets or as a foreign villain until he struck lucky with another stereo-typical, but sympathetic part as the psychiatrist Dr. Larsen in *The Seventh Veil*, (Theatrecraft-Ortus 1945, dir. Compton Bennett).

8 Lieven, a screen actor in Germany during the 1920s and early 1930s, first appeared on the British stage on 21 June, 1937, as Prince Albert in *Victoria Regina* but the tiny parts he obtained in the films *Spy for a Day* (Two Cities 1940, dir. Mario Zampi) and in *Night Train to Munich*

broad free-flowing argument of *Les Trois Amis* in the French section found its equivalent in a regular series *Kurt und Willi*, a dialogue between a naive secondary school teacher who accepts all German propaganda as true and his cynical counterpart Willi Schimanski an official at the Propaganda Ministry where, according to legend, it was greatly admired. The two actors were Peter Illing who was later to appear on British stage and screen and the theatre actor and producer who had also worked for a number of the larger German film companies as a scenario writer and director, Fritz Wendhausen.¹ 'Goring has done a most admirable job.... The feature and production work...has reached a very high technical level under his supervision,' wrote H. J. Dunkerley².

The Émigré and the BBC Before 1939

Artists such as Elisabeth Bergner and Marlene Dietrich who were desirable catches before 1939 were not so after the war: the BBC was enthusiastic about them before 1939 and lukewarm after 1945. Bergner had arrived in England in 1932 with a huge reputation 'the only stage actress since Bernhardt and Duse to be known by her surname,'³ the star whom Dietrich had 'worshipped from the wings,' but public

(20th. Century Prods. 1940, dir. Carol Reed) as Captain Hausemann and an unnamed German, respectively, were commonplace émigré roles.

⁹ Gellner, a coach, brought in Lom. Van Loewen had a 'marvellous' speaking and singing voice. Information from Marius Goring, interview with author, 1 Aug 1990.

¹ It was written in English by Norman Cameron and put into Berlin dialect by Bruno Adler, the German writer who was at PWE. Illing was also the voice of Churchill, in translation, for the German Service.

2R134 148 4, H. J. Dunkerley to HSA, 18 Dec. 1944.

³ Emlyn Williams, Emlyn, London, 1973, p. 231. C. A. Lejeune in 'The Private Lives of London Films', *Nash's Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 1936, p.113 painted a broader picture and thought that although she was known only to the 'highbrows', nobody 'in England, so far as I can discover, cared a hoot about Elisabeth Bergner.' There were similar mixed feelings about her theatrical talents. According to a correspondent for the *Observer*, 29 July 1934, she 'finished an eight month's run in a theatre at which not a single seat has remained unsold ...' But James Agate, *Around Cinemas*, London, 1948, p. 140, writing in April 1935, thought little of the experience,

enthusiasm for her waned in the face of her capriciousness. C. B. Cochran, who had introduced her to the English stage was surprised to discover 'that the Bergner goodwill was weakening' by March 1936.¹ The BBC, which wanted to feature her both on radio and in one of its television broadcasts from Alexandra Palace, was to come up against her 'star temperament' in various unsuccessful attempts to arrange an appearance. In May 1933 Val Gielgud had starred her in Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* but initial enthusiasm had turned to dust; an invitation to read a story by Hans Anderson or by the Brothers Grimm on Christmas Day 1936 had been turned down because 'You must not forget that I am a foreigner and every little thing I do in English has to be well prepared in advance.'² There was indeed some truth in this but

and when *Lscape Me Never* was taken to New York in 1935, it was less than rapturously received. 'As far as I can discover,' wrote Gilbert W. Gabriel 'she is the only person who could go on thinking it good.' He questioned the 'consignment of cute smiles and cooings and knee scratchings which she threw in for good measure ...', unidentified New York newspaper cutting, 19 May 1935. Thirty years later, the director Curtis Bernhardt, thought it possible that no one remembered her at all. See, Mary Kiersch, *Curtis Bernhardt*, Metuchen, 1986, p. 109; also Kiersch's less complete interview with Bernhardt 'Ich war immer ein Romantiker', in *Arfruhr der Gefuhle*, ed. Helga Balach et al, Berlin 1982, which derives from the same tapes.

¹ Charles B. Cochran, *Cock-A-Doodle-Do*, London, 1941, p. 19. Certain males, Cochran, Ivor Montagu, and J. M. Barrie, for example, were besotted by her. Montagu had been fussing and sending her flowers since 1924 when, whilst on an assignment for *The Times*, he had met her at the screening of a rough cut of her first film, *Nju*; see Ivor Montagu Collection. Bergner discovered that she had to work harder in England than in Germany and did not like it, see the *Observer*, 29 July, 1934. In Germany matinees would have been performed by younger actresses. By Jan. 1938, after the failure of the J.M. Barrie play *The Boy David* and of the the film *Dreaming Lips*, Wilson Kent commented in *The Millgate*, Jan. 1938, that she 'needs an outstanding role with which to regain her place in the front rank' *KW* announced in 1936 that she had been signed by Goldwyn for three years to make films directed by Czinner, to include *The Boy David*. Nothing came of it. Czinner formed other companies to exploit Berger: Interallied Film Producers Ltd. with C. B. Cochran and Joseph M. Schenk on the board and Carl Mayer as its literary editor; Orion Film Productions with Richard Norton and J. Arthur Rank, for which he and Bergner made *Stolen Life*.

² Bergner, Artist, Bergner to C. H. Brewer, 16 Dec. 1935. Cochran, however, had found that she was already able to speak English when he met her in London for the first time, the day after her marriage to Czinner on 30 Jan. 1933 and Val Gielgud, *Years in a Mirror*, London, 1965, p. 66, describes rehearsing her with 'language lessons' in her hotel for the Ibsen play. She had learnt a little at school and had tried a language Summer School in Cornwall. Subsequently, the famous language coach Flossie (Florence) Friedman helped her. She told Eva Orbanz that Friedman gave up all her other pupils and devoted herself to her, see *Elisabeth Bergner*, ed. Halga Belach, Berlin, 1983, p. 16. Bergner divulged to Earl Wilson that she learnt her lines with a cork in her mouth. 'When I take the cork

a compromise attempt to have her appear in a part she knew, Ophelia in *Hamlet* in 1934, failed because she was to start shooting a new film. In 1939 Bruce Belfrage suggested a subject for which her faltering English was no excuse, 'playing her original part [in a broadcast version of *Escape Me Never*] and at a fee to suit our pockets';¹ eight months later her agent R. Golding Bright proposed to Hamilton Marr that she would be interested in playing the lead in *Mary Rose*, provided she was 'given sufficient rehearsals,' to ease her lack of confidence with the English language. He rejected a suggestion for a production from Manchester, 'Unless a London production was guaranteed I am pretty sure she would not entertain it.'² A final attempt from Val Gielgud fell in with this and Bergner was offered its 'best terms' of £50 for a broadcast on 20 February. 'Must know by Saturday Yes or No.' telegraphed Gielgud.³ The answer was 'No' and it is hard not to conclude that the fee did not subscribe to her image of her own importance.

There were similar attempts by Dallas Bower, fervent to demonstrate his own indispensability, to persuade her to appear on television. Czinner had insisted that Bergner would need to see some television in production prior to any arrangement and Bower was determined to comply. He invited her to watch R.C. Sherriff's *Journey's End* on 11 November 1937 in which Laurence Olivier was to appear as Stanhope but he had 'fallen out of the cast,' a blow to Bower, who was anxious to come to some arrangement and impress the Director of Television.⁴ Czinner, 'a well-known Wagnerian' and Bergner failed to appear on 16 January 1938 to see a rehearsal of

out...my jaws are so relaxed that I speak easily,' see *NYP*, 14 Aug. 1943. She was a bad rehearser and could act the part differently every night until she felt it was right, see Helen Ormsbee, *NYHT* 15 Aug., 1943.

¹ Bergner, Artist, Czinner replied for her, 'I think your idea is delightful and Miss Bergner is very interested in it...but it may be that we have to go to America for a short visit and we may not be back by the end of May.' Letter, 27 March 1939. Czinner had directed the film version for B&D, with Herbert Wilcox as producer and Carl Zuckmayer as an uncredited writer.

² Bergner, Artist, letter, 19 Dec. 1939.

³ Bergner, Artist, telegram to Bright, 10 Jan, 1940

⁴ Bergner, TV Artist Clump, Bower to Czinner.

Tristan and Isolde, although his heart had been set on it and he wrote pathetically to her, 'I was so hoping that you and Paul would come to the evening performance...should you care to consider doing any play for television...the authorities would welcome it.'¹ Although she turned him down he wanted to try again, this time to persuade her to appear in *St. Joan*. 'I understand...that Bergner has turned over an entirely new leaf....'² Once more it came to nothing.

Attempts to get Marlene Dietrich for a broadcast during 1936 similarly generated excitement, although they too led to disappointment. Knowing that she was soon to be in England, London Films was approached. 'I will certainly do my utmost,' wrote back John Myers.³ She 'could sing some of the numbers she has made famous in her films. An orchestra would be available for accompaniment. With regard to the fee, you probably understand that broadcasting in this country is not run on a commercial basis....'⁴ Korda agreed to introduce her and a fee of £100 was offered for an appearance on BBC Television's first *Entertainment Parade* on 5 October. Already the alarm bells were ringing and the BBC probably wished it had not embarked on the venture. The press was quick to ridicule its efforts. 'For a recent American broadcast she received £2000. The BBC deny that they have offered her £50'⁵ When, on 31 August *Time* magazine had reported that cinema seats were empty on such occasions, the Corporation went into reverse and applied the usual stratagems of self-justification which it adopted on these occasions. Eric Maschwitz was '.... against Marlene Dietrich broadcasting in the form of an interview as this would inevitably lead to a great deal of undesirable publicity for London Films, and the interview technique being now rather stale would not provide good entertainment.'⁶ Very quickly and

1 Bergner, Artist, Bower to Bergner, 15 Jan. 1938. Her reply of 15 Feb. was characteristic. 'Your interest in me and your patience with me moves me deeply.... I don't think I should care to do any television before I've done something new on stage or screen....'

2 Bergner, Artist, memo from Bower.

3 Dietrich, Artist, John B. Myers to A. H. Brown, 19 Aug. 1936.

4 Dietrich, Artist, Brown, to H. Eddington, 25 Aug. 1936.

5 *Evening Standard*, 9 Sept. 1936.

6 Dietrich, Artist, Maschwitz to Television Director, 16 Sept., 1936.

opportunistically it was discovered that the terms of her contract with Paramount prevented her broadcasting and 'the whole thing can now be considered definitely off.'¹

It was to be a very different story for both Bergner and Dietrich after the war. Dietrich, especially because of her contribution to the war effort, was still highly regarded, and a surfeit of memoranda in early 1947 indicated that she might possibly be used on the radio programme *Variety Bandbox* or *Picture Parade*. But her star appeal was no longer enough. 'My latest advice from Paris is that one can't bear to hear her sing unless you can see her legs too; that old husky voice is now just a croak.'² Later he was to add 'We are very doubtful whether she could sustain any more than a five minute spot on song alone.'³ She did not appear.

Bergner's case is even more instructive. At the outbreak of war her reputation was fragile, but still high and she could attract high fees. Yet she was a falling star; her reputation was not to withstand her abandoning Britain for the United States in the middle of making *49th Parallel*.⁴ She worked little in America during the war and seriously needed to re-establish an audience and a reputation. In November 1950 with her and Czinner in London, 'their belongings in New York were sold by auction to meet their creditor's (sic) claims.'⁵ She had tried a come-back unsuccessfully in the theatre and proposed herself for work with the BBC who had little sympathy for her.

1 Dietrich, Artist, Dewar to Programme Finance, 22 October, 1936. She did not appear.

2 Dietrich, Artist, T. W. Chalmers to Spicer, 13 Jan. 1947.

3 Dietrich, Artist, memo, from T.W. Chalmers, 28 Jan. 1947.

4 Compared to Conrad Veidt, who was equally desperate to avoid the anticipated bombing and happy to get away, she had not been subtle about making her escape to America. BBC News Bulletins, just before Christmas 1940 announced that 'Conrad Veidt, the Film Actor, has cable \$400 for Christmas gifts to London Children.' He had probably not sought publicity, but 'nevertheless good publicity never does any harm ...', letter from Solicitors Judge, Hachman, and Judge, to Veidt, 30 Dec. 1940. Sweets, chocolate and small amounts of money had been distributed at air raid shelters and underground stations. (The solicitor, H. Burford Judge was later fined £200 for offences against Defence Finance Regulations. He had persuaded Veidt to give his sister in Canada \$500 and paid £124. 7s. 7d. to Lily Veidt's London account.) On 2 April 1940 Harold Nicolson had dinner with Kenneth Clark, then Director of the Films Division of the MoI at which they discussed 'the position of those people who have remained in the United States. The film stars claim that they have been asked to remain there since they are more useful in Hollywood ...', see Harold Nicolson, *The War Years*, London, 1967, p. 65.

5 *PPB*, 27 Nov. 1950. *PPB* adds 'They say they don't acknowledge the claims.'

She was happy to give a Bible reading from the *Old and New Testament* as an epilogue for television, at a fee which would have been met with derision twenty years earlier.¹

The slump in the British film industry since 1937 had made the BBC attractive to others. Ernest Borneman for example whose short-lived career in the script department of Criterion Films terminated at the end of January 1937, took any work he could find.² He pursued the BBC with suggestions and scripts for productions on jazz and swing, one of which was a series of radio talks entitled *From Jungle Drums to Jitterbugs*; he sent Leslie Perowne the manuscript of a book on Swing Music which he suggested as the basis for a series.³ He quickly followed it up but it was returned with the usual courtesies.⁴ Borneman attempted to turn the rejection to his advantage. 'I appreciate the difficulties of a purely technical history of Jazz, but I wonder if a dramatised history in the style of your own *Trip to New Orleans* would be an equally hopeless proposition.'⁵ He was full of suggestions as to how it might work; American speakers might be used in a way that Perowne himself had used them in his biographies of Gershwin and Irving Berlin. 'I have done a number of novels,' he exaggerates, 'written in the style of of this type of material, and I enclose a list of reviews of *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor*...just to show you that I might be able to deal with this kind of semi fiction programme as well as with the more technical kind.'

Persistence paid off and two illustrated programmes went out. He was paid three guineas for a broadcast on 28 April and he was soon offering more programmes. 'I enclose a selection of some of the more pertinent letters I have received.... They seem

1 P as B. There was one 'straight reading' on 27 May 1956 for a fee of £10 guineas. The theme was 'Security'.

2 A solicited testimonial from Douglas Fairbanks Jnr., 27 Jan. 1937, which describes Borneman as 'not only [having] assisted on the preparation of our stories but [having] read and made synopses of countless books and manuscripts ...,' did not help him much.

3 Contributor, Borneman. to Leslie Perowne, 20 Jan. 1940.

4 Contributor, Perowne to Borneman, 20 Feb. 1940.

5 Contributor, Borneman to Perowne, 23 Feb. 1940.

to have been not without some success' and suggested three more: on Hobo Songs, '*Drunkards and Tossspots* (tentative title)', and '*Smoky Dreams* (marihuana, cocaine and opium)'.¹ Perowne tried to forestall the persistent Borneman by returning some records which he had hoped to collect, but Borneman was not discouraged and was offering similar programmes even before receiving a response to his last group of proposals, and 'What about my original suggestion for a lecture on Jazz by the writer of the enclosed letter in this week's *Radio Times*?'² Borneman's pertinacity again bore fruit and Perowne responded favourably to his first set of proposals. 'The last series seems to have been quite successful, and I think two of your...suggestions would be acceptable, particularly the Hobo Songs. *The Drunkards and Tossspots* sounds a pretty (if tough!) idea, but I think I would have to alter the title.'³ As for 'the *Dope* programme.... I think we ought possibly to keep off that subject altogether. There might be objections.'

Borneman was at last beginning to be make himself felt. Perowne even liked the revisions which were 'more the sort of thing,' and would 'make entertaining broadcasting.'⁴ But then the blow struck and he was abruptly interned, ironically, according to his memory, listening to the broadcast of a record programme he had compiled *Outlaw Ballads of Two Continents* whilst on the bus which took him to the internment camp.⁵ He had unsuccessfully sought naturalisation, had feared internment and taken defensive action; three weeks before he had obtained a letter from the Germany Emergency Committee to confirm 'him to be reliable and trustworthy and absolutely loyal to this country'.⁶ But for once his energy had not saved him.

1 Contributor, Borneman to Perowne, 3 May 1940.

2 Contributor, Borneman to Perowne, 14 May 1940.

3 Contributor, Perowne to Borneman, 15 May 1940.

4 Contributor, Perowne to Borneman, 3 April 1940.

5 See Cameron McCabe, op. cit., p. 262. It included items by Ethel Walters and Tex Ritter. He gives the date as 17 May 1940. It is a good story but alas, P as B show that the programme was broadcast earlier, on 21 April 1940, one of a three part series which continued on 28 April and 1 May.

6 Testimonial, 22 April 1940. The Committee was one of the many Quaker organisations assisting refugees.

Borneman, who had been denaturalized by the German Government in 1935 and was now stateless, was not to be in a position to seek work at the BBC again until after the war; he was on his way to internment in Canada.¹

‘I am writing on behalf of my fiancé who has been interned yesterday, during the round up of “B” category aliens,’ wrote Eva Geisel whom Borneman was to marry after the war. Perowne had wanted to see the scripts for *Hobo* and for *Tossspots*, but she was in a difficult situation and could not ‘do anything about this, without having received some kind of message from Mr. Borneman. We do not know where he is at this moment.... Perhaps he will be allowed to continue his work in the internment camp, and...we might come to an arrangement. All this is very regrettable.’² After 1945, his work was not much admired: Martin Esslin for example, on 14 Aug. 1961 in asking for a report on two plays, which Borneman had sent in, added ‘I know the author quite well — but have few illusions on his work.’³

The War and the Émigré

The outbreak of hostilities struck heavily at foreign nationals and the stateless refugee. Calder observes how they became the ‘most obvious targets for hatred.’ Employees, the sixteen year-old Peter Lasko, for example, who had started a career as an assistant art director to Alex Vetchinsky at Gainsborough Studios on *Night Train to Munich* (1940),⁴ were sacked for being either foreign or of foreign descent; there were suicides ‘at the mere threat of internment,’ attacks on Italian restaurants and ice-cream parlours when Italy entered the war, and internment itself.’ Calder writes of internees having ‘a rich cultural life, the Amadeus Quartet was born, one of them described it as “a fabulous time.”’⁵ This partial recollection emphasises the popular

1 Cameron Mc Cabe, op. cit., p. 262.

2 Borneman, Contributor, Geisel to Perowne, 17 May 1940.

3 This is only one of many similar assessments.

4 The son of the film director, Leo Lasko, he subsequently became an art historian.

5 Calder, op. cit., p. 150-153.

view of the British at war, it was the best of times, but it ignores the difficulties which were specific to the émigré and refugee and fails to identify their role in the war effort. Insofar as émigrés who otherwise worked in the film industry were affected, their experience at the BBC is illuminating. As we shall see, by seeing describing of a romp Calder smooths over their difficulties.

When war came, one group of artists who had broadcast before the war and were awaiting naturalisation, had MoL permits to work. It was less straight forward for others, and there were exceptions. The film actor Gerard Heinz who had spent a year in a Nazi concentration camp and had come to Britain in 1938, via Czechoslovakia and Switzerland, only to be interned in 1940, was soon afterwards making a contribution to the European Service although he was still stateless in 1946.¹ For a few actors, Walter Rilla for example, there was continuous employment throughout the war, although for the most part he was not to act.² It was not until the beginning of 1943 that the BBC took the lead from the Government and eased restrictions on other friendly aliens, and even then, it considered that engagements should be ‘rigidly controlled.’

When Italy entered the war Alfredo Campoli the orchestral conductor found himself without work, although he had lived and worked in England since 1911. ‘It was recognised before the war that there was no-one to touch him, in the superb playing and leading of café music,’ wrote Kenneth Wright,³ but neither the BBC nor the

1 Heinz’s family name was Hinze. He had spent a year in a Nazi concentration camp before coming to England. He did not establish himself easily and entered films in Britain with *Thunder Rock* (1942), which was a feast for refugees. Although he had appeared on the stage as early as 1938, in *The Bartered Bride* at Covent Garden, his reputation, at least until the end of the war, rested on his performance in Terence Rattigan’s *Flare Path* at the Apollo Theatre in 1942. His main and steady source of income, although modest, remained the BBC.

2 Rilla joined the staff of the BBC on 2 Oct. 1939, resigning on 6 October, 1945. He continued to produce for them. He nursed his wife for two years during a terminal illness and lost all his contacts. Goehr wrote to Gielgud, 8 April 1948, asking if he could help. Work was indeed found., see Rilla, Artist.

3 R27/3 2, Wright to Tallents, 7 Feb. 1941. In some respects Italians suffered more severely than German and Austrian exiles for the great majority considered themselves to be patriots, a sentiment which they did not relate to fascism.

Gramophone Company would keep him on. He was refused naturalisation as he was not 'doing work of national importance' and exceptions could not be made. Wright, invariably liberal and open minded, quietly worked against the regulations and restrictions especially as there was general concurrence as to his musical qualifications, but at a meeting of the Home Board at which Harold Nicolson was present it was 'agreed that it would not be expedient' to employ him.¹

The desperation which some of the acting profession felt in the early days of the war was, for many, part of a wandering existence. Severe unemployment in the theatrical and film professions had existed since early 1940. Small theatrical companies, the Torch Theatre which the Norwegian actor Gerik Schjelderup had helped found for one, reopened in December 1939, but actors especially, although many of them lived from hand to mouth in normal conditions, now found themselves in dire situations. According to the *New Statesman* in December 1940, of the 1,500 members of Equity one would have expected to find working in London there were only twenty-six.² When Michael Powell offered a part in *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* to the British actress Googie Withers who 'was hard up and at her wits' end,' she 'broke down and cried'.³

For the alien in Britain, circumstances could be even more difficult, for few had any savings at all and, although they did have the refugee agencies to fall back on, as we have seen, even 'friendly alien artists' found their opportunities limited by Government restrictions on employment. The tiny Irène Prador, sister of the admired Lilli Palmer, was, at best, a minor actress who had appeared in small uncredited film parts during the 1930s and experienced great difficulty in finding work.⁴ The young

1 R27 3 2, Tallents to C (A), 28 March 1941. He was later allowed to accept ad. hoc engagements with the Corporation.

2 Robert Hewison, op. cit., p. 29.

3 Michael Powell, *A Life in Movies*, London, 1986, p. 191.

4 In 1952, she unsuccessfully proposed herself for the part of Trudy Bäume in *Mrs. Dale's Diary*. Ted Kavanagh proposed a play, *Follow that Hat*, for her, but she was described as 'not a good artist,' and more kindly as 'not strong enough to carry a star part.' 'I think she is terrible' minuted

Austrian actor, Philo Hauser, who had arrived in Britain via Belgium on 19 February 1939, classified as a 'Friendly alien — a refugee from Nazi oppression,'¹ and exempt 'from special restrictions' found himself working at the Greengate & Irwell Rubber Co. in Salford. His four years of experience in theatre and film had not been recognised but he had been allowed to enter the country as an apprentice. In April 1940 he was living in Manchester when he was invited to give his 'personal impressions' for *English Journey*.² Hauser was soon back in London shifting from one address to another. His income was small: two guineas each for a five minute reading of *Resistance News* on the German language programme *News Talk* on 6 February 1942, the same for an inscription on a programme produced by Marius Goring, *Doctor Wächter*, and for his work as a news reader on Austrian Talks on 6 March 1942. But work was difficult to come by and he was not to find a part in films until after the war when he was given a small part in *Against the Wind* (1948, Ealing, dir. Charles Crichton) alongside Peter Illing and Sybille Binder. In 1942 he was able to find work at the tiny Lantern theatre and later he appeared at the Chancery but in general there was no work other than that which the BBC was able to offer. An ingratiating letter to Walter Rilla was typical of many: 'I hope you will remember me...through your influence I was fortunate to have the privilege of broadcasting for the Austrian section of the BBC...unfortunately I did not succeed in getting a fixed contract...knowing about the splendid work you are doing in the Home Services, I wondered if you could make use of my abilities in any way. As you may recall I was on the stage and have done quite an amount of writing....'³

He was gradually creating a small reputation and finding frequent employment for himself; he appeared in a German-language production at Toynbee Hall of Goethe's

another producer, wanting to avoid meeting her, 'She worries everybody very much,' She did get a little work on television.

1 Hauser, Artist File.

2 On 23 April 1941, the first of D. Geoffrey Bridson's productions.

3 Hauser, Artist 1. 1942 -1962, BBC WAC, Caversham

*Iphigenie auf Tauris*¹ and in a number of features for the European Service: the Austrian feature, *U-Boats Then and Today: We Have Nothing to Lose* on 8 September 1943. The end of the war brought problems of its own, similar to those at the beginning but in reverse, when Overseas broadcasting took a different path. Soon he was pleading for employment again. Identical letters went out to four producers on 19 November 1946 and Wilfrid Grantham did in fact audition him although nothing came of it.²

It was little different for the much-admired Sybille Binder who had been well established on the German and Austrian stages prior to 1933 and saw herself as having been Vienna's equivalent to Edith Evans prior to the Anschluß. In 1926, she had appeared as Emilie in the production of Brecht's first play *Baal* at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin, alongside Oscar Homolka and Paul Bildt.³ On Hitler taking power in Germany she had made her way to England via Vienna and Paris but it was not until the war that she first appeared in films.⁴ For Binder there were few opportunities of this nature and she recaptured little of her pre-Hitler reputation. Walter Peacock had recommended her to the BBC and she was auditioned as early as 24 June 1936. She was invariably described as 'the well known' or 'the famous' Continental actress, but in the end her reputation counted for little and nothing much happened. Two years later the German Jewish Aid Committee reminded the Corporation of her presence in Britain and shortly afterwards Brian Crozier wanted her to play the leading part in his television production of the Spanish play *The Viceroy of Peru* ⁵. 'I shall be glad if you

1 On 3 Jan. 1943 and produced by Erich Neuberger, who, the programme reminded its patrons, would be known from the Kammerspiele Leipzig.

2 Letters were dated 19 or 20 Nov. 1946 and were to Martyn C. Webster, Felix Felton, John Richmond, and Wilfrid Grantham. Grantham auditioned him on 12 Jan. 1947.

3 On 14 Feb. 1926.

4 In *Thunder Rock*. Rolf Popp was one of the Assistant Directors, Wolfgang Wilhelm on the screenplay, Mutz Greenbaum on the camera, Honoria Plesch on the art direction, Hans May provided the score and Lilli Palmer, Frederick Valk, Harold Anstruther were in the cast.

5 On the 9th and 15th Nov. 1938

will apply for a permit for her.’¹ The BBC made an exceptional, if nervous, effort and wrote of her as

a Viennese actress of very high standing in her own territory, who...was admitted to this country under the special dispensation applying to political and racial refugees. Miss Binder is not, we understand, in possession of the usual form of permit enabling her to undertake engagements in this country, and in any event the opportunities for the employment of an artist of this nature are somewhat infrequent. We are now proposing however to produce in our television programme.... *The Viceroy of Peru* in which the leading female lead is unsuited to an obviously English artist.... [We] desire to enquire whether in these circumstances you are able to give the necessary permission for her undertaking this work in return for a fee of 20-25 guineas.²

The Home Office replied positively on 5 November but the process had taken four weeks and the BBC were not over-generous. She was paid 18 guineas.

Almost immediately war was declared Binder, now British by marriage, wrote offering ‘A few suggestions with special reference to Vienna’.

My idea is not to make a frontal attack...the whole programme, music, dialogues and what not, must be of essential Austrian quality...and calculated to give the listeners a feeling of ‘homesickness’...the whole programme should be given by Austrian voices using Austrian expressions. One of the bitterest humiliations to the Austrians when Hitler marched in was the substitution, after two days, of a German announcer....³

It was received as a rather splendid suggestion but once more nothing followed directly from it and she received a characteristic rejection. ‘It is extremely kind of you to offer your services for German broadcasts...and we will certainly avail ourselves of your kind offer if a suitable occasion arises.’⁴

It was another disappointment to her and she appealed to the actor John Gielgud who guided her towards his brother Val. This time something did happen for Sir Lawrence Jones had asked Stephen Tallents to intercede on her behalf as a person with ‘personality and intelligence’, and she was soon working on *German Women’s Talks* for the German section. She first read *The U-Boat Dream* and four months later read

1 Binder, Artist, memo. to W. Streeton, 7 Oct. 1938.

2 Binder, Artist, Streeton to the HO, 19 Oct. 1938.

3 Binder, Artist, Binder to BBC, Sept. 1939.

4 Binder, Artist, letter 21 Sept. 1939.

Fraulein Poldi.¹ But it wasn't much, and the latter, which was to be the successor to a series in which Annmarie Hasse had portrayed a typical Berlin housewife in Berlin, *Frau Wernicke*, 'came to grief at an early stage,' before it could be developed. 'The trouble mainly was that the writer did not suit the actress and vice versa'. She was made to record the piece and it was passed to a listening panel which 'finally turned it down.' Although 'she was really in no way to blame'² it did not help her English career. She was desperate for work as well as desperate to participate in the propaganda war against Nazism and continued to send in suggestions to various departments and sections, generally receiving polite responses but few offers.

When in 1943 she discovered that a production of the legendary WW1 story *Mademoiselle Docteur* was being planned she was quick to propose herself for the part of Anne-Marie Lesser but she was too late and her letter had come 'post factum' wrote Walter Rilla, for it had been broadcast the previous Friday, 21 May 1943.

'Anyway, I don't think there would have been a part for you, as Fraulein Doktor, who in fact was a very elusive person and hardly ever left her headquarters in Antwerp, did not appear in the programme.'³ His amylaceous reply was only slightly softened by the usual BBC courtesies and the promise that 'I shall certainly think of you if in any of the coming programmes there is a suitable part for you.' Binder subsequently had a small career in Britain both in the cinema and on the stage, but it was not up to much.⁴ After the war, she sought work in Germany.

Many actors and actresses found themselves with less work than before the war, and in general aliens were suffered and not appreciated. Whilst he was still in the army

1 Binder, Artist, Gielgud to A. E. Barker, 23 July 1940. Caversham. Gielgud appears to have understood from her that the BBC had approached her in the first place. *Fraulein Poldi*, was written by Bruno Adler.

2 Binder, Artist, Mrs. C. Gibson to Boswell, 20 Jan. 1941.

3 Binder, Artist, Rilla to Binder, 27 May 1943.

4 *The Man From Morocco* (ABPC 1945, dir. Max Greene) was directed by the lighting cameraman of her only previous film in England, and, once more, there were a number of exiled actors and actresses in the cast; *Latin Quarter* (British National 1945, dir. Vernon Sewell) was a ponderous remake of Sewell's first feature *The Medium*.

Marius Goring had tried to help find work at the BBC for Lucie Mannheim, but without success; her name was suggested to a number of producers but, as was her experience in the cinema, she was little used.¹ Her admired performance of the dual role in Bruno Frank's *Nina* at the Criterion Theatre in 1935 had 'completely deceived' George Arliss for two out of three acts. 'It was the cleverest performance of a dual role that I have ever seen' He had Hitchcock's *The Thirty Nine Steps* run off 'and at once decided that she would be exactly suited to the leading part in *East Meets West*. Gaumont-British...put her under contract,'² but she made few screen appearances.

The theatrical agent Christopher Mann who was married at the time to the glamorous Norwegian actress Greta Gynt similarly tried to find his spouse a role broadcasting to Norway. 'She would...not desire remuneration.'³ The BBC suggested that she 'could either recite a shortish patriotic piece...or else she might...sing a song. Or perhaps even both,'⁴ but neither were done. In fact Gynt's experience was typical of many, for the BBC used foreign nationals as little as possible. They were required in the German and Austrian Sections because of their language or their abilities as translators, but outside of them the BBC tolerated rather than looked at ways in which their skills and experience could be used.

Erich Pohlmann the Austrian refugee had initially offered his services as a singer and joined the German and Austrian Service at the beginning of the war. He was an actor 'fairly well known — in Vienna,' playing leading parts and singing Schubert, Schumann and light music.⁵ His work, in spite of his appearance on the London stage,⁶ was not greatly admired by the BBC staff. He did sing and perform for German features⁷, but he was 'only "fairly well known in Vienna,"' quoted the

1 Goring Artist, letter from AW to Goring, 28 Feb. 1941. They were now married.

2 G. B., 1936, dir. Herbert Mason.

3 Gynt, Artist, letter from Mann.

4 Gynt, Artist, Overseas News Editor to Mann, 8 June 1940. She did sing on 23 June 1940. She later appeared in *Variety Band Box*, with great success, as did Lilli Palmer.

5 Pohlmann, Artist, letter from Pohlmann to Musical Department, n.d., c.27 Aug. 1939.

6 In *Cyrano de Bergerac* at the Old Vic and *He Who Gets Slapped* at the Duchess.

7 These included *Wir fahren immer Hinunter*. He resigned early in Feb. 1948.

Drama Booking Manager disdainfully. He couldn't recall his part in *Cyrano* and suggested 'it was not of much consequence' whilst *He Who Gets Slapped* was 'one of the major theatrical "flops" of last year'. The less said about that the better. Derision characterised his reference to John Hanau, 'who I imagine to be a mid-European, and in the habit of collecting around him a number of artists such as Pohlmann whenever the opportunity for casting them presents itself;' Hanau probably knew Pohlmann 'personally' before casting him in the Edinburgh Festival production of *Everyman*.¹ It was not at all uncommon for producers to personally know the artists who worked for them but there was often a conviction that émigrés stuck together and helped each other out whilst the British had to fend for themselves.

For those who arrived after the Nazis had entered Czechoslovakia, reception was often more sympathetic. Karel Stepanek who had entered films in Vienna in 1921 and appeared in over fifty including *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1931) arrived in England via Italy only in January 1940. He wanted to join the resistance committee but was not accepted into the exiled army by Jan Masaryk, and Electra House recommended him to the BBC as a political commentator and actor with its foreign service. He quickly learnt to speak English, although he was condemned to foreign parts, making his London stage debut 31 July 1941² and his first British film *Secret Mission* (IP-Excelsior, dir. Harold French) the following year. In September 1943 he was wanted to play Conrad Veidt's part in a Home Service broadcast version of the film *Casablanca*.³

Another Czechoslovakian actor Herbert Lom (H. Kuchacevich) had come to Britain a little earlier during the Munich crisis in 1938 but without refugee status. Instead he lived in Cambridge with a couple who were friends of his parents and his sponsors,

1 Manderson to German Productions Supervisor, 3 Feb. 1948.

2 In a revival of *Close Quarters* (Apollo Theatre). Other plays include *Scoop* (Vaudeville Theatre 1942), *The Moon Is Down* (Whitehall Theatre, June 1943), *The Rest is Silence* (Prince of Wales 1944) and *Jacobovsky and the Colonel* (Piccadilly 1945), in which he appeared with Michael Redgrave.

3 Stepanek, Artist, H. Hewitt to MoL, Aliens Dept., 28 Sept. 1943.

but it was financially difficult. He was auditioned in both Czech and German before being offered work at the BBC and was glad to take it, not least because it was recognised as work of national importance.¹ He received five guineas for work on *Vormarsch der Freiheit* (March of Freedom) No 15 which was produced by Rilla and transmitted on 15 February 1941 and a number of other programmes followed.² On some he was partnered by Frederick Valk but paid less, even less than Paul Demel and Martin Miller and considerably less than Albert Lieven.³ By May 1941 he was living at Marlow, Bucks., and like many others, chasing fees for broadcasts.⁴ His name, he complained, was being misspelt as Kuchacevitch and though his film career was developing he was pleased for the employment. He worked as an announcer-translator and appeared as Churchill in a Parliamentary Feature written by Robert Ehrenszweig, alongside a Stafford Cripps played by Gerard Hinze.⁵ As his film career developed he was able to move to London and eventually set himself up at the White House in Albany Street, close to the BBC in Portland Place. Both he and the actor

1 Anne Roche, secretary to Herbert Lom, to author, 14 Dec. 1988. It is not always understood that Lom was holidaying in Ireland at the time of the Munich Conference and did not return to Prague: Dina Lom (née Scheu) to author, 27 July 1989. A letter to *Screen International*, Nov. 29 1986, comments that he is not Jewish, but, according to Dina Lom his mother converted to Christianity, which would not have helped him much with the Nazis.

2 These included *Der Anschluß*, *Fontamara*, and *Die Drei Autobus fahrer von Oslo*, as well as many issues of the magazine programme *Vormarsch der Freiheit*. Other well known actors and actresses also appeared in *Vormarsch der Freiheit*: Amy Frank, who had already acted on the London stage and had appeared in films in Germany but was not to do so in Britain until 1946, her husband Friedrich Richter, whose first film in England was *Squadron Leader X* (RKO-Radio 1942, dir. Lance Comfort).

3 Demel and Miller received six guineas and Albert Lieven, considering the distance 'he has to travel and his eminence as a star,' was paid eight for No. 3. Lieven was living in Leatherhead. He had appeared on radio and television before the war. He was in *The Rake's Progress*, with his then wife, the Reinhardt trained, Russian born, Tatiana Lieven in May 1939, and in *The Deacon and the Jewess*, a fortnight later, in which he played Simon. Lieven joined the BBC staff at the end of 1940. Martin Miller's wife, Hanne Norbert, also worked for *Vormarsch der Freiheit* from Dec. 1940 to Feb. 1941 and for Rilla on a feature, *Durchhalten*, in March 1941. Later, on 3 May 1943, she joined the staff of the Overseas Service German Section and remained at the BBC until 1951. Valk was classified as 'same scale as Mrs. Sybille Binder.'

4 Herbert Lom, Contributor. His full name was Herbert Charles Angelo Kuchacevich ze Schluderpacheru.

5 Lom, Artist. The feature was transmitted on 28 Feb. 1942, with Goring as Hitler. Ehrenszweig took the name Robert Lucas.

Ferdi Meyer 'are among our very best announcers. They have very rich pleasant voices, and speak a pleasant neutral German with a slight southern accent',¹ which is 'extremely valuable to set off the preponderance of Berlin accents.'² But even for the actors who were to establish themselves the curse was less that the BBC did not admire their work but that the émigré was condemned to also play the role of the exile or the villainous German. They performed roles which historical events had forced on them or parts shaped by the way in which others saw them.

Apart from the stereotyping, there was also a clash of ideologies; styles of performing and methods of interpretation which had grown out of a German experience of the first two decades of the century were less appropriate to a Britain of the early 1940s. Meinhart Maur struggled throughout his career in Britain. He had worked successfully on the stage and in the cinema in Germany. In Britain, he had had a modest part as Ornia in Korda's *Rembrandt* (LFP 1936) and another as Karl Grunlich in *21 Days*³ (LFP-Denham dir. Basil Dean) in which his difficulties with the pronunciation of English is exploited and the BBC had auditioned him but had nothing to offer; Bruce Belfrage promised to bear him in mind but suggested that his English needed improving. 'I have been working the whole time very hard at the Department of Phonetics at the University College,' he wrote 18 months later.⁴ 'I have been working in films,' he added significantly, 'playing, most successfully, a variety of character parts. (... the "German Commandant" in *Who Goes Next?*....). At present I am playing a very interesting part, a Viennese psychiatrist, at the Embassy.'⁵ This time Belfrage offered even less; he wanted to be assured that he had 'definitely

1 13 148 4, H.J. Dunkerley to DSA, 10 Feb. 1943..

2 Lom's first film role was in *Mein Kampf, My Crimes* (ABPC 1940, dir. Norman Lee). Valk became his dramatic coach.

3 Made 1937 but not released until May 1940, it was adapted from a Galsworthy play by Graham Greene. Korda, interfered and directed one sequence to 'inject a more Continental atmosphere,' see Kulik, op. cit., 1975, p. 218.

4 Maur, Artist, Maur to Belfrage, 24 May 1938.

5 *Who Goes Next?* (Fox-British 1938, dir. Maurice Elvey) is a WW1 film set in a POW camp and has something in common with a number of British films of the late 1940s and 1950s.

lost all trace of his accent,' and to be assured that it would be possible to cast him in 'straight English parts.'¹ It was an unkind and insensate rejection but after he had appeared in a television production of *The Man in the Bowler Hat* in July 1938.² Maur tried again and a number of small parts did follow.

After he had appeared successfully by all accounts in *Address Unknown* he was hoping that more would follow and 'as my English has enormously improved and I am not confined any longer to so called "foreign parts", [I] could cover the last trace of my accent under a brilliant characterisation' Belfrage felt pestered and was more than curt,³ but Maur was now desperate and wrote to Val Gielgud whom he had never met. 'I am writing to you under the pressure of terrible financial worries, and I cannot choose my words, and what I am going to tell you now may sound sentimental or silly.... I am madly in love with the English language'⁴ He looked forward to becoming as much as English an actor as Joseph Conrad had become an English writer. But there was nothing for him and he later offered himself as a trial member of 'the BBC drama repertory company for a month, as a specialist for character parts with foreign atmosphere....' although when asked to indicate the kind of parts he had in mind could only pitifully suggest Shylock, Caliban, and Mephistopheles.

Maur persevered; he was given a small part in a broadcast of *The Story of Nurse Edith Cavell* as Baron Von den Lanckden, German Governor of Belgium⁵ and he found another in the Jack Hilton and William Mollison stage production of the Stanley Lupino musical comedy *Lady Behave*, in which once more his accent was to the fore as a film director of the Erich von Stroheim variety. It wasn't Shakespeare but it led directly to another part as a film director, Steiner, in the film, *We'll Smile Again* (British National 1942, dir. John Baxter). Val Gielgud reluctantly met him on 23 July

1 Maur, Artist, Belfrage to Maur, 25 May 1938.

2 As was to be his lot, Maur played 'the chief villain — a part requiring an authentic German accent and appearance....'

3 Maur, Artist, Belfrage to Maur, 14 Oct. 1940.

4 Maur, Artist, Maur to Gielgud, 14 Jan. 1941.

5 Broadcast 28 April 1941.

1942 but this only led to another unsuccessful audition and Walter Rilla thought that 'he could only be used for special parts' because of his 'very strong German accent.'¹ Others commented kindly, but unfavourably. He had, it was recognised, done good work in an earlier programme 'but in the Shakespeare passages which he chose to read, [for his audition] he had far too little variety and sensitiveness, and his accent is much too cumbersome except for Shylock — and he couldn't do Shylock.'² It was painful for Maur: 'I suspect the fault lies with the agency who interferred (sic)...and who asked...for too much money (because I am very well paid in films),' he wrote to Dallas Bower.³ He had had bronchitis and begged for 'another, fairer chance,' but any possibility he had of work at the BBC had now gone. There had been attempts to help him, especially when it was known he was in gross financial difficulties. 'I will do my best for [Maur]' wrote Stephen Haggard, sympathetically, in response to some internal correspondence. 'At one period I considered getting him to do some talks for me, but the snag is that he is a real German and therefore it would be hard to persuade our listeners that he is in the British Forces.'⁴

It is a sad story, for although he had never been an outstanding actor on the European stage, he never failed to remind his correspondents that he was a former member of both the Max Reinhardt Theatres and the Berliner Funkstunde [Radio] and known as 'the man with a thousand faces'. He won a minor part in Marcel Varnel's production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* at the Strand Theatre and, although he persisted with the BBC there was no work forthcoming until after the war when he worked briefly in the German section for Julius Gellner, the ex-director of the German Theatre in Prague. If he has a small reputation at all in England it is for his part in *Dick Barton*

1 Maur, Artist, Rilla to Features and Drama, 7 Aug. 1942.

2 Maur, Artist, Stephen Potter to Features and Drama, 11 Aug. 1942. He tried again with another audition in November, 1946, when he read from Shaw and Shakespeare as well as a Russian Fairy-tale. It was the same story and his acting was 'perhaps a shade "ham" for broadcasting. His foreign accent would preclude him from playing straight English parts (which is his great ambition), but he is perfectly competent to play foreigners, Jews, giants, etcetera.'

3 Maur, Artist, Maur to Bower, 19 Nov. 1942.

4 Maur, Artist, Haggard to Miss Hewitt, Drama Bookings, 22 May 1941.

at Bay (1950) in which he played the sinister foreign agent, Volkoff. He suffered the fate of many, but it was less prejudice that kept him from work than a different perspective on acting.

For Lily Kann the situation was even more difficult than it was for Maur. She had been on the stage since she was 15, a well-known actress throughout Germany. Like Maur she was now approaching 50 years of age. She had managed to get to Britain only late, in 1939, and had been interned in 1940. In February 1941 she wrote in German to Walter Rilla, at that time still Chief Producer German programmes, desperately seeking work and hoping for some kind of permanent position, but she fell ill and was unable to make the microphone test.¹ She was penurious and harassed by the restrictions on her movements. 'Will you...please remember that I have to report to the police-station Shrewsbury before leaving.... You know our financial situation. I am not in a position to pay or advance the expensifs (sic) of the journey.'² Somehow she managed to get to London and walked in without an appointment but wasn't seen and she wrote, shame-faced, a few days later 'I am very sorry for what I did the other day — please excuse my impetuosity — I obviously did not quite realise that you are far too busy to be able to receive anybody without an appointment. So I ask you for one in writing.'³ By August she had moved to Matlock; Rilla was both able to offer her a little work and have her fare paid. and although he couldn't 'make any definite promises as to regular employment,' he considered her chances to be 'fairly good' and urged her to move closer to London as he thought it would be possible to use her 'at least three or four times a month.'⁴ Within a month she had again moved, this time to Maida Vale, but she was to move again and again over the months but at least she began to work fairly regularly for the German Service. She was in some ways fortunate for her financial situation was understood and payment

1 Kann, Artist, Kann to Rilla, 5 Feb.1941. She, like many others had been rendered stateless.

2 Kann, Artist, Kann to Rilla, 23 April 1941. Rilla had written again to invite her for a test that day, but she was again unable to make it.

3 Kann, Artist, Kann to Rilla, 12 May 1941.

4 Kann, Artist, Rilla to Kann, 29 Sept. 1941.

for her was pursued by colleagues within the Corporation. She was also finding more regular work reading and acting in programmes produced for the German service by Julius Gellner, H.W. Buxbaum and Rilla, for fees of four and five guineas a time.¹ Frederick Valk and Gerard Hinze, acted with her in *Revue nach Ruechwärts* in January 1942. She was no longer close to starving, but apart from occasional work for the Club Theatre of the Free German League of Culture and the work with which the German service was helping her, she began, bravely one might think, also to give German elocution lessons. She wanted to broaden her horizons and tried for work on the Forces Programme. 'How can we get a line on whether Lily Kann or Kannt?' asked Kenneth Wright, in a typical piece of BBC wit, shortly after Max Kester had auditioned her for *King of Lampedusa*² and was recommending that she be heard in another capacity. If Meinhardt Maur wanted to play dramatic roles in the English language, Kann wanted to sing. Most of her German repertoire of songs by Weill, Holländer, Allan Gray and others had been banned by the Nazis, but she sang in French, Yiddish and English as well. If 'she is as good a singer as she is an actress, she should be worth hearing.'³

Once more, there was a conflict of ideologies and the BBC had little appreciation of a style of singing which was associated with German literary cabaret. Her contralto singing, popular in the theatre, did not go down too well and she was described as 'a woman with a great deal of personality, but rather overwhelming. She has a masculine voice.'⁴ Her roles were restricted although she tried to break out into general broadcasting, appearing in *This Happy Breed* amongst others and proposed *Medea* to Val Gielgud as a 'part which I could play — as it's problem and tragedy is that the

1 One of these was a series, characteristic of the German and French Service, *Herr und Frau Knoeterich*. Opposite her was Gerard Hinze.

2 She thought she was dreadful but Kester thought otherwise..

3 Kann, Artist, Kester to Wright, 31 March 1944. Her popular numbers in Britain included Cole Porter's *Love for Sale*, and the folk-song, *A Peasant and a Pretty Wife*.

4 Kann, Artist, Arthur Wynn to A.H. Brown, 13 May 1944.

heroine is a foreigner in Greece.’¹ She was much liked and made a ‘very great success at the Arts’ Theatre in *Awake and Sing*,’ noted John Glyn-Jones, who described her as ‘a strong emotional actress [who] speaks with a German-Jewish accent and is no use for straight parts, [but who] would be useful to producers who need such characters for features.’²

Richard Tauber the singer/ conductor, was unable to come to terms with the English language either. The Viennese-born American director Paul Stein had slipped into a cinema in Golders Green, London to see him in the Tobis film *The End of the Rainbow* and found that the audience was applauding after every song. The following day Stein had practically set up *Blossom Time*, ‘provided the language difficulties would not prove insurmountable.’³ Tauber thought it possible to sing in English but ‘Ausgeschlossen’ [impossible] to speak it. In the event John Drinkwater, who worked on the script, substituted alternative words for those Tauber found unpronounceable. Indeed his performance closely resembles the obligatory English lesson to which foreign characters in films were frequently subjected in British films.⁴ His limited English and a voice which was no longer at its peak meant that he looked forward to establishing himself in another career, this time with the BBC. Apart from his singing his one big ambition, his agent wrote, is to ‘conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra and to have the opportunity of conducting a rather more serious work than he has included in any of his past broadcasts’⁵ but the BBC was less than enthusiastic and he

1 Kann, Artist, Kann to Gielgud, 22 Sept. 1945. Gielgud was sympathetic to the suggestion. But nothing happened.

2 Kann, Artist, Glyn-Jones to Drama Booking Manager, 15 March 1943. She did play in features as ‘a Jewish mother’ or some similar accented part. She began to dislike these parts, much preferring the possibility of playing an adventuress.

3 Diana Napier Tauber, *Richard Tauber*, London, 1949, pp. 156-157. In fact Paul Stein seems, understandably, to have been more concerned with Richard Tauber’s ‘style of acting.... German acting is much heavier...it savours of over-acting,’ see *FW*, 24 Aug. 1934. Tauber’s dialogue makes the characters he plays: Franz Schubert, Canio Tonini in *Pagliacci*, and Joseph Steidler in *Heart’s Desire*, for example seem simple minded.

4 *Blossom Time* was, nevertheless, popular and was voted the best British Film of 1934 by the readership of *Film Weekly*, ahead of *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, *The Wandering Jew* and *Little Friend*.

5 Tauber, Artist, E. W. Evennett, Harold Holt Ltd. to Arthur Wynn, 12 April 1940.

was, anyway, asking for too high a fee. He composed as well and Kenneth Wright went along to hear his new *Symphonic Suite* in rehearsal at the Parlophone Studios. 'If Wright's report is good, I will get in touch with Tauber. If not, I do not feel enthusiastic, because when Tauber conducted the *Fledermaus Overture* last time he was here he really conducted very badly indeed. His interpretation was, I thought, awful, and he certainly kept the band guessing most of the time.'¹ Tauber was to appear on the German Service as well and he offered to broadcast regularly on the Forces programme, but it was all quashed because of the restrictions over alien composers and conductors. The Suite 'was much liked...and under normal circumstances we should have been delighted to include it under Mr. Tauber's direction, but this is a pleasure which...will have to wait.'² Harold Holt's company, obviously angered, passed the letter to Charles Graves of the *Daily Mail*, which, to the BBC's embarrassment, published it. The BBC rationalised the situation in its usual way. 'Holt's offer...was unacceptable to the BBC [because] Tauber wanted not only to sing but also to conduct, and not only to conduct but to conduct his own compositions. As his conducting had never yet, as I know of, been put to the public test, our refusal...could be put in a very much fairer light....'³ Subsequently, it made arrangements for Tauber to appear on the Home Service, 20 September 1941 with the Theatre Orchestra, although it balked at having to pay him 150 guineas, even if he was popular. The performance was to be 'a test case for the future.'⁴ 'We will certainly watch the Listening Barometer...most carefully but our judgement of Tauber's value must rest not only on the listening figure but also upon our own professional opinions....'⁵ The audience was large and 'A Listener Research Report'

1 Tauber, Artist, MPD to Wynn, 11 June 1940.

2 Tauber, Artist, Wynn to Evennett, 4 July 1940.

3 Tauber, Artist, M. G. Farquharson, to B.M., 25 July 1940.

4 Tauber, Artist, P. V. H. [Assistant Director of Programme Planning] to Programme Finance, 21 Aug. 1941.

5 Tauber, Artist, P. V. H. to Music Programmes, Ex., 30 Aug., 1941.

classified it as A-minus in terms of popularity; unsurprisingly, the BBC's professional opinions were less favourable.¹

Performing Rights

Early in the war the Corporation adopted the simple expedient of not performing the music of enemy alien composers whose work was in copyright. Officials took the list of composers registered with the Performing Rights Society for Italy, Germany, and Austria and circularised departments with a list of banned names including a number of people who were already in exile: Erich Korngold, Franz Waxman, Hanns Eisler, Paul Hindemith, Kurt Weill, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Mischa Spoliansky. Another drawn up by Anna Instone includes Marlene Dietrich, Wilhelm Furtwangler, Wilhelm Kempff, Greta Keller, Rawicz and Landauer, Josef Schmidt, and Anton Walbrook.² The lists which were catch-alls already looked dubious but the BBC compounded its difficulties by attempting to ban all music from German or Italian occupied territories as well as music which it took to be nationalistic or sounded especially German or Italian. It was 'desirable that music by British composers should be fully exploited and that...the broadcasting of music, to whom PRS payments are due, should be limited.'³ Money paid to composers and record companies of enemy countries would be sequestered under the Trading with the Enemy Act.

At one point there was an instruction, exceedingly difficult to apply, for all singing in Italian to be struck from programmes which meant that opera was severely

1 Tauber, Artist 'A Listener Research Report: Summary of Opinion of Listeners in the Forces', 7 Oct. 1941.

2 Alien Composers, R.27/3/1. Lists drawn up between 30 July 1940 and 4 Sept. 1940. It wasn't until June 1940 that music by Alban Berg, Eisler, Carl Goldmark, Hindemith, Erich Korngold, Arnold Schoenberg and others was again allowed to be performed. Gustav Mahler was allowed after 15 April 1941. At the same time, the work of Poulenc, then thought to be a collaborator, was restricted and works by Charles Trenet were banned for the same reason.

3 R27/3/1, memos from R.S.Thatcher, 11 Dec.1939 and 11 Sept.1939.

affected.¹ Somewhere along the line all manner of confusions existed and a meeting held in June 1940 recognised that ‘if the Corporation banned all works by these composers, it would be exceedingly difficult to find alternative works of British origin...for this purpose.’ Such copyrighted composers as Franck, Debussy, Ravel, Delibes, Gounod, Massenet, Grieg, Sibelius, and Verdi, would have to be omitted. A compromise solution was sought by which a list of composers was drawn up, whose music could be heard over the airwaves simply because they were already established in the ‘public’s affection’ and to which there was no alternative ‘at the moment’.²

The Director of Music, Bristol, W. K. Stanton was ‘horrified, and also disappointed.... We have heard so much about music having no boundaries, and all that, and I should have thought that this policy, besides causing embarrassment to programme builders, would bring down a shower of curses...on the score of the smallness of vision and pettiness.’³ Each fresh BBC instruction led to a new range of supplementary difficulties; Francesco Tosti whom the ban included had become a British citizen about 1880, ‘surely his name should be removed’ wrote Maurice Johnston from BBC Bristol; he had, wrote another colleague, been accompanist ‘for many years at the court of Queen Victoria’; another person on the list had been ‘a very distinguished *English* Teacher of singing’. In fact the BBC continued to ban performances of his music on the false understanding that the royalties from them would go to his descendants abroad. The organist Sandy Macpherson was concerned that Will Grosz the composer of *Red Sails in the Sunset* and *Isle of Capri* was on the banned list; Grosz had been in England as a refugee for some years and ‘practically all his tunes have been composed with English lyric writers and published by purely English firms, there being no continental copyright entanglements whatsoever.’⁴ One

1 The usual British compromise was eventually arrived at which allowed broadcasts of Italian opera in English.

2 R.27 3 1, minute of meeting, 28 June 40. The list was modified later and became more exclusive.

3 R.27 3 1, Stanton to Thatcher, 24 July 1940.

4 R.27 3 1 Macpherson to Meehan, 13 Aug. 1940.

wag asked for permission to use a short extract from a recording of the late Marchese Marconi suggesting that he no longer counted as 'an enemy alien but as an immortal'; someone else asked if there was an objection to the broadcasting of *Silent Night, Holy Night* on account of its German origins. The conductor of the BBC Theatre Orchestra Stanford Robinson was disturbed to discover that a male singer of Maltese extraction, Satariano, could only sing satisfactorily in Italian. Even though Italian was an official language in Malta and 'therefore an official language in the British Empire,' this fact was not to be mentioned on the air; the number of arias in Italian was to be kept down and if they had to be sung in Italian, they had to be announced in English.

Restrictions had been introduced at the beginning of the war to restrict music which expressed what was described as 'the German spirit',¹ and BBC policy was now fuelled by the Fifth Column scare. The policy was 'to be kept dark', but Ralph Hill nevertheless disingenuously explained it to listeners in the *Radio Times* and added that 'half a dozen or so unmusical newspapers nearly succeeded in securing a ban on the music of Beethoven as well as of Richard Strauss.' during World War 1.² Compton Mackenzie was 'horrified' to read of "'a movement afoot to ban the music of enemy countries in toto,'" and described the policy as 'a piece of BBC idiocy'.³

Apart from the need to restrict the flow of money to enemy states, the main purpose was 'The psychological reason that a vast number of listeners...are irritated by the inclusion of enemy composers, just as they are at the German and Italian languages'.⁴ Precisely where the evidence was to support this is not clear and adjustments and corrections continued to be made. Oscar Straus who was already French had his name removed from the banned list, Leo Fall, already English, was also removed, but

1 27 3 2, C (P) to Thatcher, 24 April 1941. The BBC felt free to perform Siegfried Idyll, but not Siegfried.

2 *Radio Times*, 1 Nov. 1940. He added 'No one can deny...that while Germany has contributed little of supreme value in literature and painting (Goethe, Schiller, Holbein, and Dürer are notable exceptions), the art of music would have been infinitely poorer had Bach, Mozart...never existed.'

3 *The Gramophone*, Dec. 1940.

4 R.27 3 1, Thatcher to Stanton, 29 July 1940.

‘Mischa Spoliansky, although resident in England and composing for British films, should be avoided until further information is available.’¹

The payment of royalties to foreign nationals in enemy territory was not the point at issue and the banning of Spoliansky was not adventitious. He had been out of Germany since 1933, stripped of his German nationality and was, once more, a Russian citizen. His banning and unbanning trails the Ribbentrop Pact and the German invasion of Russia. The BBC was performing in concert with internment policies and moving with a broad sweep to ban everything that could be associated with the enemy. At the point when Herbert Farjeon was recommending Spoliansky to Cecil Madden in 1941² and *Picturegoer* noted that the BBC was ‘making use of Mischa Spoliansky for an overseas broadcast,’³ an opera which he had been invited to submit was returned unopened.⁴ Spoliansky was deeply offended, especially as the music publishers in Nazi Germany had failed to pay him royalties before the war but the banning notice although not totally effective was not withdrawn for nearly five months,⁵ and when it was, Spoliansky still found that the administration was slow to respond.⁶

The ‘overseas broadcast’ to which *Picturegoer* had referred was the putting of music to *The Soldier’s Bride*,⁷ a poem by Brecht which Goring had translated into English. Kenneth Wright had found it to be ‘...one of his best efforts, and likely to

1 R. 27 3 1. Instruction from Thatcher, 5 Aug. 1940. It wasn’t clear whether the ban extended to broadcasts on the European Service. ‘I imagine that to get foreigners to listen to our programmes we must play them at least some of their own music,’ wrote one programmer. Raymond Glendenning wrote to Arnold Perry a poem, 28 Oct. 1940, expressing his concern. Spoliansky had been found to be a member of the Italian Performing Rights Society, hence his ban. He had joined on 1 Oct. 1933, after leaving Germany, and remained a member until 1 Oct. 1940, Spoliansky papers.

2 Spoliansky, Artist, Herbert Farjeon to Madden, 6 Jan. 1941.

3 *Picturegoer and FW*, 8 Feb. 1941. Wilson D’Arne was asking for Spoliansky’s music to be allowed into domestic broadcasts.

4 Spoliansky, C R, Wright to M. P. (Ex.), 1 April 1941.

5 Spoliansky, Artist, Goring to Miss Alexander, Programme Copyright, 22 Feb. 1943.

6 Spoliansky, C R, Rilla to Miss Peacock, 13 Jan. 1941. Spoliansky had been denaturalized by the Nazis and reverted to Russian nationality. After the war, he became a British subject. He had done occasional work for the BBC before the war.

prove a winner.’¹ Goring asked for the highest possible fee as it ‘is only due to the great inventiveness of Mr. Spoliansky’ that it had been achieved.² Because of the ban however Madden did nothing about employing him and nearly four years later, by which time Spoliansky had firmly established himself on the foreign service, still needed to know ‘whether he plays the piano himself.’³

Everyone had their favourites whom they wanted left off the list and the ban caused difficulties for programmers, whilst also being misapplied. But more significantly programmers and artists were opposed to the ban. Anna Instone described the banning of composers as ‘a horrible thing’⁴, and Leonard Isaacs noted:

that by withholding performances of music by men who themselves are anti-Nazi or who have been persecuted by the Nazis or even died before 1933, we are using the enemy’s own technique to our own moral disadvantage. To me it seems an indefensible state of affairs when we perform Wagner.— himself a ‘proto-Nazi,’ and will not play a note of Schonberg (sic) who was driven out of his country by these very Nazis.... I submit that the economic aspect of the question should be subservient to the ethical one....⁵

This points to the central issue at stake. It was similar to internment policy and had little to do with the banning of music by Nazi composers or composers who were sympathetic to the Nazis. As time went on Finnish, Hungarian, Roumanian, and Japanese music was not encouraged either, but just as everyone was indiscriminately rounded up and interned only to be slowly released as the policy was widely seen to be foolish and destructive, the same occurred with composers and musicians.

1 Spoliansky, C R., Wright to Miss Walters (Programme Copyright), [c. June 1942]. It was broadcast in the original on the German service and in translation on domestic services, sung by Lucie Mannheim, accompanied by Spoliansky.

2 Goring Artist, Goring to Mr. S.F. Stevens, 5 Jan. 1942. It was also performed in a recital by, with Irene Eisinger at Wigmore Hall, 10 Jan. 1942.

3 Spoliansky, Artist, Madden to Arthur Wynn, 25 Nov. 1944. Spoliansky was a fine pianist. In the 1920s, he recorded Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*, in a version much admired by the composer, and accompanied Tauber in recordings of Schubert’s *Winterreise* and a set of German folk songs. For a number of broadcasts throughout 1943-4, he was contracted to coach and accompany Lucie Mannheim and other singers in broadcasts from Bush House. He also appeared in *Changing the Tune*, 30 Aug. 1943, which exploited his skills as a pianist.

4 R27 3 1, Instone to Thatcher, 2 Dec., 1940.

5 R27 3 1, Isaacs to M.O., 28 Nov. 1940.

It can be seen that the loss of money to foreign sources was, once more, a subterfuge for pursuing a scapegoat policy, described as a principle of 'musical fascism' by M.O., with the additional irony that music by composers banned by the BBC continued to be played successfully to audiences in concert halls and theatres throughout the country. The ban simply robbed 'the listeners of opportunities for hearing much pleasant music,' observed Dennis Wright, 'both Mr. O'Donnell and I would be quite glad to see the ban lifted.'¹After an unpleasant meeting of the Music Advisory Committee, in which there had been some fierce disagreements the policy was relaxed with a report from its Sub-committee which, as B. E. Nicholls observed 'comes into the "nobly vague" category and could be interpreted to mean anything.'²In other words, the policy had collapsed but faces had been saved.

As the war began to move in favour of the allies the BBC turned its energies towards 'collaborationists', with similar vigour. Charles Trenet, Lucienne Boyer and Maurice Chevalier were cases in point. Lt.-Col. Grisewood to Harman Grisewood, wanting their performances banned by the BBC, considered them to have 'put their duty to their country second either to their artistic vocation or to their careers or their desire to make money.'³ As before some BBC staff considered the whole business a farce but their employment was offensive to many Frenchmen who certainly did see them as collaborators. But the list also included the composer Francis Poulenc, Sacha Guitry, and Mistinguette who were not collaborators.

1 R27 3 1, Wright to Thatcher, 6 Dec. 1940.

2 R27 3 3. Nicholls to Sir Cecil Graves, 24 Sept. 1942.

3 R27 3 4, The story in Germany after 1945 was even more complicated. The BBC was unable to get confirmation of any collaboration by Chevalier. It was even suggested, by the Press Officer, George Frank, Gouvernement Provisoire, possible that 'he had helped one of the Resistance movements in the southern zone, and this statement has...remained unchallenged.' Letter to John Wall, 1 Nov. 1944, R27 3 4. Music General, Alien Composers, 4. Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart describes him as one of the 'worst'. There are 'Almost no lengths to which collaborationists will not go to purify themselves...many of worst go to Communists,' *The Diaries*, Vol. II, op. cit. p. 364. Chavalier was never entirely exonerated and a ban continued, confirmed to the BBC by the Director-General of Radiodiffusion Française, R 27 3 6, Marriot to A/C, 13 Nov. 1946.

Ironically, Spoliansky who had found himself almost unemployable at the beginning of the war was now needed again. On 24 July 1944 he agreed 'to render part time service' to the BBC's European Division 'to undertake research...in connection with the building of variety and musical programmes suitable for broadcasting to Germany, and to act as advisor over production methods, the availability and selection of suitable artists....'¹ His suggestions, not surprisingly, included many authors and lyric writers, composers and songs not heard in Germany for twelve years: Kurt Tucholski, Brecht, Marcellus Schiffer, and Ralph Benatzki among the writers; Holländer, Oscar Straus, Richard Heymann, Kurt Weill, Hans May, Allan Gray, and Leo Fall among the composers; songs and features including his own *Zwei Krawatten* were recommended, alongside the 'best English and American popular numbers...possibly with German words' and the 'best English and American musical plays'.²

There was a partial attempt at a domestic purge. Clarence Raybould, then Chief Assistant Conductor, Bedford, wrote to the Director of Music, about 'the notorious tenets' of Michael Tippett, who had a work down for a broadcast by him on 4 July 'as a conchie coupled with the recent sentence to gaol for refusing to abide by the conditions of his exemption.... I cannot agree with V. W.'s statement in his evidence at Court...when he said that Tippett's work is of national importance...and I cannot help my own feeling that people of this strange political creed...should not be allowed to carry on as they do while other musicians, of a more realistic outlook, are men enough to be doing something more useful in the matter of National Service.'³ If Tippett's work must remain in the programme, he wanted it to be in someone else's.

1 Spoliansky, Artist, Contract, this continued until 10 March 1945.

2 Spoliansky papers. Artists included Rawicz and Landauer, André Kostalanetz, the Comedian Harmonists, Claire Waldoff, Marlene Dietrich, Duke Ellington, Lotte Lenja and Marta Eggerth.

3 R27 3 4, Raybould to ADM (Gen.) London, 23 June 1943. Lists were being compiled, corrected and added to: Poulenc was deleted, Jean Françaix added, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was removed and Pierre Fournier and Beniamino Gigli, who 'Pandered to Fascism', added. The ban on Gigli was lifted on 17 Feb. 1945. Chevalier was tried by a Court of Investigation and cleared, but he lived in discreet retirement for a time and never recovered from the taint of being

The Fifth Column

The policy towards French language territories was to sustain morale and to confirm a belief in an Allied victory; the function of broadcasts to Germany was to sap German morale and encourage a sense of defeatism. Although the German refugees and émigrés felt themselves as ‘allies in the war against Hitlerism’,¹ and were doing a job of national importance they felt constantly under suspicion. The restrictions placed on enemy aliens after May 1940 understandably filled many of them with anxiety and, after the collapse of the Allied Front in France, with fear.

Some members of BBC staff caught up in the Fifth Column scare felt that the emigre could not be trusted and spread rumours within the corporation about members of the German Section as Fifth Columnists. Members of staff were believed to have private transmitters in their houses. Not surprisingly some émigrés felt themselves to be under suspicion although they were ‘doing work of national importance.’² The Head of Translations, V. Duckworth Barker whilst generally sympathetic cynically passed off their distress in memoranda headed ‘German Jitters’, but morale among the refugees and émigrés was seriously affected by the fear of mass internment. Duckworth Barker chronicled the stages of depleting morale: the German breakthrough at Sedan, the French withdrawal from Amiens, and ‘with the fall of Boulogne there was very nearly a débâcle. Several members of the unit, in a

associated with the enemy. The banning of named French artists became recognised as a farce and the policy, ineffectively applied, was finally abandoned on 4 November, 1947. The policy towards German artists who collaborated with the Nazis turned out to be even more tortuous.

1 Quoted in Mansell, op. cit., London, 1982, p. 154.

2 R13 148 1, Duckworth Barker to OHE. 31 May 1940. Duckworth Barker, a linguist, was known as ‘Ducky B’.

state of great despondency, professed themselves unable to work until better news came.’¹

There was something of the stiff-upper-lip in these memoranda, and perhaps an incomplete appreciation of their justified fear. Duckworth Barker would ask supervisors to go into the German room on the pretext of making some small correction whenever a small item of better news came through, in order to placate what he described as ‘the somewhat childish German mentality,’ and what he clearly saw as funk. A copy of this memorandum was annotated by a personnel officer with comments. ‘This is what I always feared, and is a strong argument in favour of replacement by other nationals — preferably British. A service given by tremblers is worse than no service at all. More important is the risk of sabotage and the opportunity of 5th Column work.... I am sure they would round on us if they thought they could save their own skins by doing so.’

Members of the German staff were not allowed close to the King and Queen when they visited the Overseas Services at Broadcasting House on 16 July 1940. Unlike the French they were not allowed to appear over the air as themselves and commentaries were always spoken by an English voice to avoid the suggestion that the émigré station was being run by, or on behalf of, Jews. It had been BBC policy from the beginning of its broadcasts to Germany not to make use of identified refugee speakers. But no exile could be safely free of the paranoia of the period.

At the same time it provided opportunities for axes to be ground. A report on the broadcasts to Austria on 23 January 1942 contained extremely critical judgements: ‘Announcer definitely Austrian, reading bad. One gets the impression that he does not understand what he is reading....’ Whilst another was ‘very good indeed (pleasant voice!),’ its script contained ‘a kind of cheap journalese in which the BBC had better not indulge....’² The following day the same figure relaxed and noted that the news

1 R13 148 1, Others, according to Duckworth Barker mentioned ‘one or two translators’ who endeavoured to leave for South America.

2 R 13 148 3, Monitor’s report 23 Jan. 1942.

announcer 'is certainly not an Austrian, perhaps he is from Moravia or rather Silesia (Bielitz?) to judge from his broad, soft vowels; moreover he is certainly a Jew and one of the squashy kind at that.'¹ A short talk on 'Free Austria in London, against the deadly foe of their country' exhibited 'a certain lameness...which if treated with more dash might have provided one of the best Austrian propaganda stunts for months....' The listener continued in this vein, describing the outpourings of the Austrian broadcasts, with references to 'soft Jewish pronunciation' and criticism of the scripts and 'a bad piece of poetry...appalling...when there are such things as Grillparzer's great verses on Austria....' His criticisms mostly of scripts and voices, continued to mount, and his report for 27 January developed a view which had previously been implicit. This one had 'a most unpleasant Jewish voice with guttural accent. This is just the kind of voice that would render most Austrians more suspicious than even the most pronounced North German accent.' Another was 'almost Yiddish.'

Duckworth Barker knew that Austrians made this kind of observation; the late Count Huyn 'used to say that any educated Viennese Aryan could tell invariably whether another Viennese was Jewish or not after the first few syllables spoken over the telephone.... We have ... known cases where an outraged listener has complained of the Jewish accent of an Austrian announcer whose background was purely aristocratic.'² It turned out however that the listener was right about the 'Jewish origins' of both the news-readers to whom he was objecting, but one had been picked out at a microphone test by Ralph Murray. Statistically the listener stood a good chance of being right as Jews featured largely amongst refugees and exiles, but he 'has a good voice and on the whole does not appear to merit these strictures.' The other, the one described as having 'soft, squashy, Jewish pronunciation...may convey a Jewish impression to someone on the watch for these things. [H. E. Herlitschka] is as you probably know, the wellknown (sic) translator of Virginia Woolf, Charles

1 R 13 148 3, Monitor's report 24 Jan. 1942.

2 R 13 148 3, Duckworth Barker, to C (Eur. S.), 9 Feb. 1942.

Morgan and other stylists, and there is something aesthetic and perhaps non-virile about his approach to things.’¹

A Secret memorandum from the Ministry of Information to the BBC entitled ‘Fifth Column Tricks’ and made up of rumour stories, many of which could only have been taken seriously at a time of panic, was sent to F. W. Olgilvie at the BBC.² Walter Goehr came personally under attack; Becket Williams had been trying to get Goehr removed, ‘Whether it is this terrific danger we are in; and the slow anger that is blazing forth in this country against anything savouring of fifth column work, or some other reasons,’ he wrote in a letter, ‘the fact remains that these complaints have intensified even since I wrote to Boulton.... Gore (sic) and his compositions are obviously not essential (for I can name at least two arrangers who are probably quite as good as he, and happen to be British — and out of work)[.]’³

Kenneth Wright, clear headed as usual, had already responded once on behalf of Sir Adrian Boulton, pointing out that ‘Goehr’s naturalisation papers, which had been applied for before the war, have now come through.’⁴ He responded sharply. ‘I hope we are

1 It is worth remembering that the British establishment made a distinction between German political exiles and those who were considered to be first and foremost racial exiles, that is, Jews. Anthony Glees, *Fake Politics during the Second World War*, Oxford, 1982, p. 54 f., makes clear, the reason for this was that it was anxious not to be made vulnerable to propaganda charges from Germany that it was fighting on behalf of Zionists. When seeking evidence about the use of concentration camps for propaganda purposes, Halifax asked that ‘We should not make exclusive use of Jewish sources but show that perfectly good Aryans and German Catholics have also had to suffer.’ Glees notes ‘the curious belief’ that Jewish Germans ‘spoke German with a Jewish accent which could be recognised on the radio’. There is plenty of evidence of this in the BBC files, where there were interecine suggestions of Jewish accents, from émigrés themselves wanting work. Glees points out, there ‘is no such thing as a German Jewish accent.’ Official position was to disassociate policy from anything which could be conceived as Jewish inspired so as to avoid any suggestion that Jews were fuelling the war.

2 R 34 258, letter and memo. from A. P. Waterfield, to Olgilvie, 28 May 1940. Amongst some of the counter-measures which had been mentioned in Parliament, it mentioned the banning of all Communist and Fascist Societies and the interning of their members, which had been proposed by Sir George Broadbridge, 23 May 1940, the internment of female aliens, which had been suggested by Col. Burton on the same day, and ‘scrutiny of BBC personnel’, on the grounds that a member of its staff was married to a German whose brother was in the German forces.

3 Goehr, Conductor, Williams to Wright, 22 May 1940.

4 Goehr, Copyright, Wright to Williams, 20 May 1940.

discussing the same person. I mean Walter Goehr, whose nom de disc (sic) is George Walter. You are persistently referring to Gore, and you had better get the identity fixed before you go further.... If you yourself are in possession of vital information or even suspicions, to which you make oblique reference...then you know better than I what you should do. We are as keen on protecting the service and the country as you are and you would be surprised if you knew the thoroughness with which investigations are being carried out continuously with regard not only to artists, but to all of us'¹

Prolific and industrious, Goehr became well-known under the name of George Walter, a name he used for his lighter operations and for his 'band' The Orchestre Raymonde, although he always used his own name when conducting more serious works or accompanying international artists.² It was all too complicated for the BBC which wanted to suppress the obviously German-sounding name of Goehr and elevate that of Walter. All his appearances on the air were to be under the latter. It was to lead to a characteristic BBC muddle.

A Question of Taste

Among the composers who worked for the BBC during the war were Francis Chagrin, Walter Goehr, Mátyás Seiber and Mischa Spoliansky, a Roumanian, a German, a Hungarian, and a Russian. Throughout the period Ernst Hermann Meyer

1 Goehr, Music Copyist, Kenneth Wright to Williams, 23 May 1940.

2 Goehr, an authority on 17th. and 18th. Century and contemporary music, was, among other things, to introduce works by Michael Tippett, Benjamin Britten, and Matyas Seiber to British audiences. He was to compose and conduct the score for David Lean's *Great Expectations* (1946). Professor Alexander Goehr believes, incorrectly, that he may have used the name Walter to protect his father who was still in Germany; letter from Professor Alexander Goehr to author, 1 May 1989, but confirms that he 'composed concert music...and conducted film music and operetta' in Berlin. The name George Walter, as the documentation shows, simply characterises another level of his work. His pseudonym appears on British films from the mid-1930s. He had been, since Berlin, a friend of Allan Gray and conducted under his own name some of Gray's scores for Powell and Pressburger during the early and mid-forties. Gray and Goehr, both students of Arnold Schoenberg, were also neighbours in Amersham, Bucks. Goehr's son, Alexander, took piano lessons from Gray as a child; letter from Professor Alexander Goehr to author, op. cit. Goehr's parents survived the war and he first heard from them again at the end of Nov. 1945.

who as early as 1933 had produced the occasional programme of early music notably for the Boyd Neel Orchestra, had only one piece commissioned, for the series *Pass the Ammunition*, in 1943.¹ Francis Chagrin would be called upon to arrange and conduct the music from ‘a scratch orchestra made up of some of the most brilliant musicians in London’ and which he would record at the Maida Vale studios.² He ‘was a wonderful man, especially good to work with, with a great air of friendliness and communication’ said the animator John Halas, for whom he was to compose about twenty films;³ although he never felt him to be a “real composer”; his value came from his skill at adapting the works of others.... He was more like a clever amateur who could adapt his style.... [He] created the air of a wealthy composer, but was always struggling to make a living.’ He composed tunes and variations at great speed for the nightly programmes which were devised to poke fun at the enemy in a form ‘which one would more normally expect to find in small cabarets on the Paris Left Bank.’⁴ He composed for example ‘a musical setting — based mostly on Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony — of a two minute song and fanfares’ which was recorded on 26 June. He was paid one and a half guineas for his arrangement of *Chanson des V*, which was part of the ‘V’ campaign, the symbol of an Allied victory,⁵ and three guineas for an arrangement of a song by George Auric which had been used in René Clair’s 1932 film, *A Nous la Liberté*.⁶ By the end of the war Chagrin had built up an

1 ‘A Radio Picture of War Transport in Action’ was Broadcast on 21 April 1943, Home Service. The BBC took advantage of his technical skills as a sound technician and his knowledge of early music, but his political views were well known and none of his music was broadcast.

2 Mansell, op. cit., p. 129.

3 John Halas, interview with author, 22 March 1989. Meyer and Seiber also worked for Halas and Batchelor and Halas admired their music more. Chagrin wrote for for numerous documentary films and a little incidental music for the theatre. Halas (né Halasz) came to England in Oct. 1936, after a short two-minute film of his had been seen by a team of entrepreneurs, to develop, after Anson Dyer, the first animation unit in Britain. They were ‘Some people — a photographer called Craik, someone called Deans, and a German playboy called Weisbach who was husband of Brigitte Helm.’ Halas to author, interview, op. cit. Helm, who had appeared in Lang’s *Metropolis*, was retired by this time.

4 Mansell, op. cit., p. 129.

5 Recorded on 23 July 1941 These items were closely related.

6 Chagrin, Contributor.

excellent relationship with the Corporation although en route there had been the usual squabbles over fees and Chagrin felt that he was underpaid or, at least, was underpaid until he complained.¹ There were difficulties too over the ownership of his scores, and whilst he accepted that the BBC had 'technical ownership' he insisted on retaining the copyright.² The BBC, certainly no spendthrifts when it came to paying outside contributors, usually allowed themselves space for negotiation and whilst he was able to increase his fees for *The Marriage of St. Francis* from the proposed 50 guineas to 60 guineas in October 1942, with a further 18 guineas for conducting the score,³ when he realized almost three years later that he had not been paid for orchestrating it he had less luck; the BBC reminded him that he had originally received above normal rates.⁴

The BBC wanted some form of unit bar-rate for composers and would query time signatures in the cause of economy. 'This argument with Chagrin has been going on for a very long time.' wrote Steuart Wilson⁵, '...Chagrin was asked to put in an account at the rate *he* thought payable per bar; 2s for mere arrangements, 2 s 6d for arrangements entailing more originality, and so on, rising to 3s 6d. for original compositions. My first protest was made...when I was European Music Supervisor...when I found that it seemed...he was dividing 6 8 bars into two 3 8 bars and, therefore, making twice the money.... [Chagrin] pointed out that occasionally he wrote in 12 8 and intimated...that he practically lost money by doing so!' There was some nervousness in tackling Chagrin because 'Chagrin does a great deal of work for the French Section...and John Sullivan [French Production Supervisor] has always been afraid that he will refuse to work for them and they will...be "up a tree". Personally I think Chagrin does very well.' Wilson wanted to

1 Chagrin, Contributor.

2 Chagrin, Contributor, Chagrin to Miss B.H. Alexander, 2 July 1942.

3 Chagrin, Contributor, letter to Chagrin, 6 Oct. 1942.

4 Chagrin, Contributor, letter to Chagrin, 24 Aug. 1945.

5 Chagrin, Contributor, Wilson to Bliss., 20 Aug. 1943. He was later to recognise that Chagrin was de facto Musical Director of the French Section, although it had never been regularized., memo. 20 Nov. 1943.

stand up to Chagrin but did not know how to handle it. 'The difficulty with Chagrin is that his stuff seems to me to be extremely capable, and he knows it.' Sir Arthur Bliss, in complete accord, recommended halving payment on certain scores which were not in their natural time signatures and agreed that they charge Chagrin every time they have to send a taxi to collect a score.¹

Wilson wanted to call Chagrin's 'bluff' for he should not be allowed to hold 'a pistol to our heads',² but in the end Chagrin was shown to be right. The suggestion that he was 'trading on his knowledge of his irreplaceability in the French programmes in order to get his fees raised has surprised me very much, as he had always been most reasonable and helpful....' wrote J. F. Sullivan, 'and I should not have thought that he would indulge in piratical conduct in business.'³ The fact of his being irreplaceable was 'hardly to be contested'; he was used to arranging 'at very short notice, which is essential to a propaganda service, and...he is quite willing to work all night' After they met Wilson, good humouredly, acknowledged that he was wrong in nearly all cases. 'Our conversation was perfectly amicable, though when any question of a deduction is mentioned, Chagrin constitutionally suffers from shock.... Ordinary arrangers get their material supplied...in a form, from which they can work direct. Chagrin very seldom had any such material.... He has a recording or a tune sung or whistled over the telephone. For the transcription of the melody into a workable form he does not charge his time.... For the moment I suggest we give up the argument.'⁴

Chagrin was a close neighbour of another émigré composer Mátyás Seiber who, according to John Halas, for whom he also worked, 'was a thin little man who hid his enormous talent behind an air of insignificance and poverty.' Yet he 'was neither

1 Chagrin, Contributor, Bliss to Wilson, 21 Aug. 1943.

2 Chagrin, Contributor., Wilson to J.F. Sullivan, n.d.

3 Chagrin, Contributor, Sullivan to Wilson, 2 Oct. 1943.

4 Chagrin, Contributor, Wilson to Miss Duncan, 20 Nov. 1943. Chagrin's contribution was recognised by the French Government after the war when he was awarded the honour of an Officier d'Académie.

untalented nor poor'.¹ Together Chagrin and Seiber collaborated in founding the Committee for the promotion of New Music in 1943,² but his work was never greatly admired by the BBC. He was eventually to become naturalized, but his first attempt must have been dispiriting. He had written to Kenneth Wright asking him if he would care to be one of his four references,³ but Wright had turned him down. 'I know and admire you sincerely as a composer, but one is concerned with your naturalisation...as an individual, and honestly I don't feel that I know you well enough to be able to give the whole-hearted guarantee that my signature would imply.'⁴

Hungarian-born Seiber had lived in Germany, mostly in Frankfurt since 1926 and had travelled in 1933 via Budapest and Russia to arrive in Britain in 1935. He contacted the BBC early in 1936, writing in German to Clark and looking for a meeting. His *String Quartet II*, seen as 'his first fully mature work,' by Hugh Wood,⁵ was curtly rejected on 17 July 1936 and his *Clarinet Divertimento*, written on a train journey on 27 April 1926, was accepted but not performed for five years. When the *Quartet* was selected for performance at the Music Festival of the ISCM in New York he reminded them of it: 'I think this would be a good opportunity to dig out my score and to get it performed'⁶ The BBC, uncharitable as ever to those who challenged

1 John Haas, interview with author, 22 March 1989.

2 The Committee became the Society. Seiber took an active role in its work.

3 Matyas Seiber, Contributor, Seiber to Wright 21 Dec. 1943.

4 Matyas Seiber, Composer, Wright to Seiber, 21 Dec. 1943. Seiber took it well and Wright subsequently followed it up with an added excuse, letter 12 Jan. 1944.

5 Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary*, London 1980, pp. 110-111. When it was heard by Leonard Isaacs at its first British performance on 8 March 1948, he noted that it had won the Colridge Prize, but described it as 'astonishingly hideous...many parts of which I found myself enjoying in spite of myself. It used all the Bartok tricks but seems to lack the inner compulsion which makes many of Bartok's wildest flights acceptable, or at any rate tolerable.... I was amazed at the absolutely revolting sounds which it is possible to make with four string instruments.... I suppose if we broadcast Bartok No. 4 we could equally well broadcast this as an example of what a really detached and clear brain can achieve along these lines, without degenerating into the morbid lunacy of a Von Webern.' See memo. from Isaacs to A.H.M., 9 March 1949, Mátyás Seiber, Composer. The fact was, as Stuart Wilson was to note, Seiber tended to frighten the BBC with his 'dry and excessively austere view of music.' See letter from Wilson to Mosco Carner, 8 June 1949.

6 Matyas Seiber, Contributor, Seiber to Isaacs, 2 May 1941. He was to propose the *String Quartet II* in 1944 and again after the war. The Music Programme Advisory Panel was a filtering

its judgements, dug its heels in although it did, as solace, arrange for a broadcast performance of the *Divertimento*.¹ Seiber was delighted and wrote explaining that the original score bears remarks like '2.45 p.m. Passan' and '10.20 p.m. Vienna.'² Another piece for Clarinet and Strings was broadcast on the European Service on 10 May 1942 but Sir Arthur Bliss, whom he wanted to hear it, delegated someone else who supplied a dismal report.

Judging from this work, Seiber has an uncomplicated mind — owing something to Hindemith, something also to the early Bartok; his themes are angular and jaunty; his rhythms alive; his texture lucid. But all this music is very simple and watered down — there is never the elemental force of Bartok. I like the long arabesque figure in the opening movement, where the clarinet gurgles in the chalumeau and then picks its way up to the high register against the delicate background of strings; and the gay effects in the scherzo are likeable, certainly, but not much more than that.... Still it was worth hearing.³

Other pieces received similar blunt treatment. His *Serenade* for six wind instruments was turned down in June 1943.⁴ His *Transsylvannian Rhapsody* was broadcast and subsequently rejected by the music panel. He was furious. 'True I had not realised that the work had already been broadcast,' explained Guy Warwick, 'but it certainly appears on the list of works rejected by the Panel. You will realise of course, that, if composers were Themselves the ultimate judges of whether works were

device. Acceptance did not lead, necessarily, to performance, for a conductor or group had to be then found who wanted to perform it and this, sometimes, did not occur. Miklós Rózsa, for example, had his *Theme Variations and Finale*, Op. 15 accepted, but there was no promise of performance; letter 18 Feb. 1936, Miklos Rozsa, Artist, 1936-62.

1 Matyás Seiber, Contributor, Phillips to Seiber, 29 Aug. 1941. It was to be performed by The New English String Quartet.

2 Matyás Seiber, Contributor, Seiber to Phillips 4 Sept. 1941. The BBC lost this original score. 'It was left in London and must, I fear be presumed lost thru. Enemy action,' noted H. Knowles, 1 Oct., 1941. They wiped their hands of it and accepted no responsibility. In Nov. 1942 it reappeared and they were more polite in returning it.

3 Edward Lockspeiser to Bliss. Bliss wrote a kind note to Seiber, referring to Lockspeiser's possibly favourable comments. Seiber had wanted Bliss to hear it.

4 Matyás Seiber, Contributor, Miss L.A. Duncan to Seiber, 17 June 1943. Compare a more recent review of this piece, *The Gramophone*, April 1990, p. 1829 in which John Warrack writes 'Mátyas Seiber was a superb musician...and this piece has a lot of his skill, his high intelligence, his craftsmanship, not least his dry, oblique wit. It does not compromise inventive standards in entertaining the mind.'

suitable for inclusion..., our repertoire would have to be considerably increased.’¹ Kenneth Wright, Deputy Director of Music, with his typical pragmatism worked through the score with Seiber and concluded that it was more than a trivial piece. This ‘was turned down in a rather highfalutin sort of way on the grounds...that it did not do justice to Seiber as a symphonic rhapsody.’² It did not pretend to be one, he wrote ‘It has already been broadcast in the European Service by Goehr and the Orchestra Raymonde...it is cued down for an orchestra like the M[idland].L [Light].O[rchestra], but I feel it deserves the fuller sound of the T[heatre] O[rchestra].’ As it turned out Stanford Robinson, conductor of the Theatre Orchestra liked it too and added it to his programme. But Seiber’s fees were generally kept low and he was beaten down.

Walter Goehr, who, like Chagrin worked for the BBC throughout the war, had worked for it since the mid-thirties. A student of Schoenberg at the Prussian Academy of Fine Arts, Berlin, Goehr had been conducting for radio, film, and stage from the mid-twenties. He composed the first radio opera *Malpopita* for Berlin Radio in 1930, composed for the Max Reinhardt Theater and had worked on a number of Julien Duvivier’s early French films. He had left Berlin in 1930 and arrived in Britain, via Austria in 1933 where he became Musical Director of the Columbia and HMV record companies. Moses Baritz of the Columbia Gramophone Company had arranged an introduction ‘Goehr has performed a remarkable feat in arranging a Japanese Fox trot,

1 Matyas Seiber Composer, Warwick to Seiber, 17 April 1944.

2 Matyas Seiber Composer. Wright to M.P.D. 11 July 1944. Seiber’s best known work, the much admired cantata *Ulysses* written shortly after the war, was also ill received but Seiber and the LCMC fought for it, letter from Wilson to Seiber, 26 Sept., 1949, Mátyás Seiber, Composer. A somewhat embarrassed Wilson wrote to Seiber, ‘We have decided to do *Ulysses*. I don’t want to explain our difficulties to you, I want you to understand that it was not just obstinacy on our part’, see Letter, 20 Oct. 1949, Matyas Seiber, Composer. Part of Seiber’s difficulty with the BBC was that the Reading Panel was considerably more conservative than some of the BBC’s own staff, notably Wright and Wilson, although Herbert Murrill, who replaced Wilson in Aug. 1950, considered the panel had been right all along in rejecting *Ulysses*. Seiber subsequently refused to submit works to the panel and controversy continued to rage about his works within the BBC. Again, compare *The Times* Obit. for Seiber, 27 Sept., 1960 in which *Ulysses* is described as ‘not only brilliantly written but evoked an atmosphere, and created a texture, that still sounds completely original, and holds the attention spellbound.’

from a single melody, The test record is amazing.’¹ Maschwitz, Director of Variety, was quick to respond. His arrangements ‘are magnificent and I think we should be able to do something with Goehr either as an arranger or conductor or both.’² In December 1934, the BBC lost the score and book of his musical play *Wie heirate ich die Tochter des Kalifen*, and were arguing over compensation, but progress was not spoilt.³ In December 1936, the Assistant Director of Music attended a rehearsal of Goehr’s Orchestra Raymonde at the Maida Vale Studios and ‘was considerably impressed, not only with the quality and standard of playing...and with Goehr’s arrangements, which have long since become a by-word in the light music world, but also with Goehr’s extreme thoroughness and efficiency during the rehearsals.’⁴ With the outbreak of war he was soon asked to compose the music for eight episodes of *The Shadow of the Swastika* for an inclusive fee of £240 and wanted to join the staff ‘so that I could work for all these departments whenever they want me....’⁵ but he, nevertheless, remained a freelance. Queries over fees were frequent but, as with Chagrin, they held no water. A suggestion that his score should be examined before copying went ahead, struck a colleague as idiotic, ‘and if we were going to send producers up to examine every score before it was copied they would spend their whole time in this way. After all reputation counts for something, and Mr. Goehr is well known to be the finest arranger in England.’⁶ In spite

1 Goehr, Conductor, Baritz to Maschwitz, 10 Dec. 1933.

2 Goehr, Conductor, Maschwitz to Baritz, 7 Dec. 1933.

3 R22 87 Legal: Insurance, Goehr. The BBC originally offered £100 and it was finally settled for £250, the Assessors being William Charles Crocker, who in June 1937, had produced a damning report on the film production companies for a group of Lloyds underwriters, see *Daily Express* 14 June 1937. Crocker was a right-wing anti-Semite, a member of the Swinton Committee and a director of the right-wing magazine, *Truth*, which Sir Joseph Ball, also a member of the Committee, secretly controlled. Their involvement with *Truth* is described in Richard Cockett, *Twilight of Truth*, London, 1989. When Goehr’s score turned up in March 1938, Goehr, through his solicitors, argued that the manuscript was now of little value as the people expressing an interest had all disappeared.

4 Goehr, Conductor, ADM to Dann, 15 Dec. 1936.

5 Goehr, Contributor, Goehr to Wright, 18 April 1941.

6 Goehr, Copyright File, Music Programmes Ex. to Programme Copyright, 10 April 1940. , BBC WAC, Caversham

of the fact that M.U. rates are charged plus extras for manuscript paper, etc., I strongly recommend that...we pass these accounts for payment as they stand. The work has presumably been done to everyone's satisfaction.... From his point of view he was given a job of work to do and got on with it, farming the copying out...and is therefore entitled to payment.¹

When he applied for larger payment than usual for his work on *Battlefronts*, John Glyn Jones considered it 'a perfectly reasonable request.... The script was only ready...at the last minute.... It was an extremely difficult proposition to tackle and by general consent brilliantly done....'² Gochr took a great deal of work off the administration of the BBC, arranged payment to copyists and orchestrators himself, and was greatly admired and respected. 'Walter Gochr...is not prepared to orchestrate the whole potpourri (sic) himself,' wrote Harold Lowe, 'as he had not the time to do so, but has guaranteed to employ first rate orchestrators who will work under his supervision....'³

He was 'one of our most brilliant and reliable composers for production.'⁴ When he conducted Michael Tippett's oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*, the BBC dourly observed that his 'performance...was reported on sufficiently well to justify our seriously considering him to conduct the first broadcast performance.... His connection with the work goes deep and...he was responsible to some extent for its production by the LPO last week.' But this brought up the question of whether he should be called George Walter or Walter Gochr. 'A point we must face is that, although...all his radio appearances [are] under the name of George Walter, we cannot very well insist on this in the case of this work, as it is...a major musical programme of a serious nature.'⁵

Gochr had never wanted to use the name of Walter except for his work as an arranger of incidental music but as his range grew, the BBC found itself in a typical tangle. Overseas Broadcasts for whom much of the light music had been prepared,

1 Gochr, Conductor, L.A. Duncan to Bedford, 19 Feb. 1942.

2 Gochr, Conductor, Glyn-Jones to Miss Candler, 13 March 1943,

3 Gochr, Conductor, Harold Lowe to Programme Copyright, 23 June 1942.

4 Gochr, Composer, Laurence Gilliam to John Salt, 29 Sept. 1942.

5 Gochr, Conductor, Wright to Sir Adrian Boult, 24 March 1944.

had strongly objected to his 'obviously German name'¹ It 'was too teutonic (sic) to broadcast,'² and was broadcasting previously transmitted programmes of the Orchestre Raymonde conducted by "George Walter" under the baton of "Walter Goehr". This is on the edge of infringing the rule about non-appearance under two names' This, typical piece of fussiness from Wilson was rationalized in the manner Goehr had wanted all along and Goehr became the only used name, although it 'is to be understood...that the name of George Walter can still be used for composition and arrangements.'³

His reputation continued to grow; incidental music for *The Harbour Called Mulberry* in March 1945 was 'to say the least, favourably commented on,' wrote Cecil McGivern, 'and everybody...agreed with me that you did a really excellent job of work.... The show depended to a very great extent on the music.... Again Walter, for another good show, many thanks'⁴ By 1 October 1946 he had taken over as conductor of the BBC Theatre Orchestra from Stanford Robinson.⁵

Writers and the BBC

The BBC was not to be a haven for writers either. On 16 January 1939 Mary McLaren, Assistant Director of Features, Drama., saw and was much impressed by

¹ Goehr, Composer, Wright to Boult, 12 Nov. 1943. The BBC were extremely reluctant to allow him to revert to his real name.

² Goehr, Conductor, Wilson to Controller of Overseas Services, 12 May 1944. Steuart Wilson was later Sir Steuart Wilson.

³ Goehr, Conductor Wynn to Director of Music, 20 May 1944.

⁴ Goehr, Conductor, McGivern to Goehr, 12 March 1945.

⁵ He received the usual xenophobic flack. A 'Mr. Urbanus' complained to *Musical Opinion*, June 1947, that he had performed 102 works by foreign composers and nine by British. 'We British should be grateful that so many non-British compositions are poured into our ears, but somehow we are not amused.' In reply to an earlier letter, in *MO*, Feb. 1947, John Amis had defended Goehr, pointing to the range of his concert programmes and praising his work with Tippett, Britten, Bliss, Humphrey Searle and others. But another correspondent wrote in June that as 'Walter Goehr is paid by British money subscribed by British listeners, it would be an act of courtesy if he featured more British works.' Goehr resigned in August 1949, feeling over-worked and underpaid.

the German playwright and associate of Erwin Piscator, Hans Rehfisch who had adapted the trial of Emile Zola for the radio. He had had the idea of writing a series of sound plays of 'some of the most famous trials of History (sic) and written first to Val Gielgud.¹ It 'is naive and could be put into better English, but I think he has very much the right ideas. Moreover, he clearly has the "J'accuse" story' ² McLaren seems neither to have known of Rehfisch nor to have realised that his *Die Affäre Dreyfus*, had been produced in the November 1929 at the Volksbühne in Berlin and it was not surprising he knew the subject. She accepted that some of the English was crude, but she did 'think that this man has a story to tell, and there is no doubt that he had experience of the treatment of dramatic plots.... But despite my dislike of his type of mind, I think he had something to sell us.'³ Later she wrote 'I found the dialogue very gripping and quite lacking in the usual naive philosophising which has bored me through endless refugee scripts' and perceptively adds 'It is essentially a stage-play, a vehicle for a man like Homolka — but I think it could be made very effective radio-material.'⁴ It wasn't done, in part because it was passed to someone who really did know who Rehfisch was and obviously didn't like his work. 'His whole approach is that of credulous hagiography to a struggle between the light of "progress" and "classical" darkness: his method that of "histoire romancés".... It is a terrific subject but the more I go over it again the more I feel it could be done very impressively on the radio.... I should very much like to have the handling of it myself?'⁵ It was bad luck and a surprisingly near thing. To cap it all Rehfisch was interned in 1940.

1 Hans Rehfisch, Personal — Plays, Rehfisch to Gielgud, 20 Dec. 1938. Rehfisch became Chairman of Club 43, a breakaway group of the Free German League of Culture.

2 Hans Rehfisch, Plays, McLaren to Gielgud, 16 Jan. 1939. Wilhelm Herzog seems to have helped with the adaptation.

3 Hans Rehfisch., Plays, McLaren to Gielgud, 31 Jan. 1939.

4 Hans Rehfisch., Plays, McLaren to Gielgud, 19 June 1939.

5 Hans Rehfisch., Plays, Vinogradoff to McLaren, 18 March 1939. Igor Vinogradoff was co-author of *Shadow of the Swastika*. Rehfisch subsequently tried again with another of his Berlin plays, the tragi-comedy *Wer weint um Juckenack?* (Who Weeps for Juckenack?), which had been produced by Erwin Piscator at the Volksbühne.

On his release Sir Lawrence Jones contacted Sir Stephen Tallents again. 'Some months ago I wrote to you about Sybille Binder, for foreign broadcasts. She is now broadcasting to Vienna, — so I feel I mentioned her to the right man!' Could Tallents help Rehfisch, 'a well-known German-Jewish playwright' in the same way? 'He wrote a lot of anti-Hitler plays etc. and had his German nationality taken away and came over here about four years ago. Of course we interned him, instead of using him, but now he has been released on account of his well-known anti-Hitler activities'¹

As a consequence Rilla and Rehfisch met for lunch on 11 February and although there were good intentions once more it failed to work out, because Rehfisch who was essentially a writer was not on the staff and was, therefore, not in a position to produce useful material for the German Service which took its detailed instructions from Electra House.²

As we have seen there were two threats to the BBC during the war. The first was from the Government, whilst the second arose from a growing awareness of the drama and music of Continental Europe. The latter led to a reconsideration of some of its qualitative judgements. The Government interventions, under the auspices of the MoI threatened the BBC's sense of itself as an impartial interpreter of both political and social taste. This was a complicated process and should not be understood as being part of a simple equation in which a dominant establishment ideology enforced its codes and evaluations on to the BBC. Most of the difficulties were resolved after 1941 when Hugh Carlton Greene who became head of the German Section, and his counterpart at PWE Richard Crossman, were in broad agreement. The BBC exercised an editorial control which was compatible with taking instructions from PWE and after February 1942 they were in the same building, Bush House.

1 H. J. Rehfisch, Talks, Clump, Jones to Tallents, 18 Jan. 1941.

2 Hans Rehfisch, Plays, memo. 13 May 1951.

The Government supported the BBC when it declined to accept a script on broadcast grounds¹ and raised no criticism when a proposed talk on the evacuation of school-children from Mr. Frederick Copeman, to be broadcast on 21 June 1940 was cancelled by the Director of Talks² because of his 'political antecedents', as someone who had been involved in the Invergordon mutiny of September 1931 and who had been a commander of a British contingent of the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War.³ There were other similar incidents involving personal judgements where the official reasons for rejection were, as they were with music and drama, frequently technical and works were judged as below standard. There was of course another agenda. Reference to the Peace Pledge Union for example was forbidden and correspondence relating the discussion surrounding a review of Ellis Roberts's book about Cannon Sheppard was suppressed by the Chairman.⁴ Sir John Anderson then Home Secretary, intervened to prevent a debate on censorship on the grounds that 'it would be most unwise for any official of the Press or Censorship Bureau to take part in a public discussion on this difficult question.'⁵ The BBC's use of known Communists is similarly revealing. They were not to be used on subjects of 'Communist interest' without consultation with the MoI, who provided a list of 'some of the subjects in which the Communist Party had taken an interest during the war so far'⁶ These included 'any subject in which the views of "the man in the street" or typical workers are freely given, the case for nationalisation of railways, mines, public

1 For example, Bracken defended the BBC's editorial freedom in the House of Commons, over rejecting a script from Mr. W. J. Brown in March 1940.

2 Sir Richard Maconachie.

3 The BBC denied that his activities in Spain had anything to do with its decision, but admitted the Invergordon incident counted in its judgement. A threatened Parliamentary Question did not materialise.

4 H. R. L. Sheppard, *Life and Letters*. The Peace Pledge was thought to be a delicate subject in wartime.

5 R34 274, mentioned in draft document, 'Broadcasting Policy, Editorial Control', Jan. 1943. There were other incidents.

6 34 313 1, A. P. Ryan to Director General, 30 December, 1941.

utilities, etc., and civil liberties.’¹ With characteristic BBC disdain for being patronised Sir Richard Maconachie noted on the covering letter ‘Any schoolboy could have told us this — at least with the Encyclopedia Britannica!’ and A. P. Ryan cheekily added ‘Why would we need the Encyclopedia Britannica?’ A list of artists who were banned on political grounds proves a mixed bag and included P.G. Wodehouse because of his disloyalty to the allied cause, the Baroness Budberg, who was Maxim Gorki’s literary executrix, presumably because of her connections with the Soviet Union, Ivor Montagu even though he was working at the MoI, as a well known Communist, and Ezra Pound. Criticism was diffused by allowing otherwise banned figures to sometimes speak but not to write their own text. Budberg eventually appeared on radio long after the war, unsuccessfully as it happens in *The Critics*, but she was with the Joint Broadcasting Committee from its inception and translated George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* for the French Service.²

Indeed, as we can see, compromises were sought to avoid the blunderbuss solutions which the Prime Minister Winston Churchill, frequently sought and to retain the benefits of the professional judgment of broadcasters. Although many perspectives were shared, there were also resistances from both the BBC and British and foreign audiences. Hence the BBC gave considerable weight to its audience reports. As we have seen, within the BBC hierarchy there was considerable discussion, but there was often a reluctance to accept evidence and even the conclusions which were drawn from audience reports could be passed over if they conflicted with ‘professional’ assessments. On the other hand, there were many where people were receptive to all or some of them. A composer like Seiber, with a disciplined European training, was a threat to a tradition of British taste, yet he also

1 R.M. Parker to Maconachie, 19 Jan. 1942. Ryan was a Government appointment to the BBC for the purposes of control.

2 To piece together her biography see, Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, *Memoirs of a British Agent*, London, 1932, in which she appears as Moura; his *Retreat from Glory*, London, 1934; *The Diaries*, ed. K. Young, London, 1973 and 1980; Anthony West, *H. G. Wells*, London, 1984; Tania Alexander, *A Little of All These*, London, 1987. She was personal assistant to Alexander Korda, read material for other companies and advised on Anatole Litvak’s *Anastasia* (1956).

had his advocates; Walter Gochr broadened the programme of English broadcast music, and with his excursions into light music threatened the traditional division between popular and concert music. Many émigré writers and actors for similar reasons found considerable difficulty in finding work at the BBC. Where some BBC staff found their writing or acting to be appropriate, others found it intolerable. Lilly Kann's singing, especially of Cole Porter's *Love for Sale*, was widely popular outside of the BBC for example, yet as we have seen her voice was rejected as 'masculine'. The war situation intensified the paradox of both requiring and wanting to exclude these foreign intrusions; xenophobia was not a factor, it was more a form of artistic conservatism which became rationalised into hortative judgments.

It is easy to see why émigrés wanted to participate in propaganda broadcasting to Germany, Austria and the occupied countries, even though their offers of help were rarely welcomed. The careers of many actors and writers had been destroyed by the Hitler period; émigrés had been obliged to learn another language and frequently they had not been able to find their feet in Britain. A few had made a significant mark: Walbrook and Veidt especially, perhaps also Elisabeth Bergner, but they were already international stars and the slightly less famous, Sybille Binder or Lilly Kann for example, even the eminent Frederick Valk or Fritz Kortner had found life none too easy. Involvement in broadcasting to Germany or Austria would provide a sense of identity and purpose and demonstrate that they too were part of the concerted fight against Nazism.

Friedrich Feher, Ludwig Berger and the Tradition of the Pre-recorded Film

Introduction

British domestic cinema of the 1930s was technically poor; home-produced equipment rarely matched anything from the from Europe or the United States; British studios with the exception of Denham after 1936 and later Pinewood, were equally inferior; its actors and actresses, with rare exceptions were culled from the stage and knew little about film technique or how to move in relation to screen lighting. The aspiration of most British producers reached no further than the putting of films onto cinemas screens as quickly and inexpensively as possible; they exploited variety acts and cheap farces from the British stage and targeted them towards the unsophisticated and mass audiences of the provinces, not because they were necessarily popular but because time and energy was not wasted with rehearsals. Even one of the most interesting of British directors of the period Victor Saville was caught up in using actors in this way; he wanted Max Miller to play a short scene as a music salesman in *The Good Companions*, but his agent thought the part too small. He didn't write the dialogue and told him simply "this is the idea of the scene, it's up to you." Saville didn't even have to supply a costume 'He was dressed in big checks and a bowler hat, I couldn't have given him a better wardrobe.'¹

World events impinged little on British cinema, although in retrospect the complete absence of contemporary political allusion reveals their centricity to it. It was impossible to be completely divorced from the Spanish and Abyssinian wars or the

1 Interview, Brenda Davis and Kevin Gough-Yates, in *Victor Saville*, London, 1972.

consequences of fascism in Italy and Germany. Michael Balcon, the most significant British-born producer of the period who was deeply concerned about events in Germany under Hitler was later to recognize:

These were, for example, the days of Mussolini's War, The Civil War in Spain with all its implications for the future....one cannot escape the conclusion that in our own work we could have been more profitably engaged. Hardly a single film of the period reflects the agony of the times.¹

Not only is there is no direct mention of the Spanish and Abyssinian conflicts in films from Britain, there is no sense of an international stage, for even the so-called 'films of Empire' are domestic in their interests. The better British films were international but anodyne in their search for the American market, the others were narrowly domestic, obliquely related to unemployment, trade unionism, education or poverty, but so distantly associated as not to be connected at all. It is difficult today to see the 'serious social' subject of the trade unions in *Red Ensign* (1934) to which Michael Powell refers in his autobiography;² the Gracie Fields's film *Shipyard Sally* (Twentieth Century Productions, 1939, dir. Monty Banks) shows no concern for unemployment in the shipyards, it was merely a fact of life. The film makes no attempt to relate it to wider social and political concerns.

A surprising number of films from all quarters end with the flag-waving and the singing of patriotic songs or with uplifting sentiments of Gracie Fields leading a chorus, which is very much the same thing. *Farewell Again* (Pendennis-LFP, dir. Tim Whelan) which was produced by Erich Pommer is said by Paul Tabori to have been made as a response to the criticism that Korda's films failed to consider the distressed areas of the country. He was turning his back on 'indictment and indignation'. The story had originated in a true incident in 1936 when a troopship with

1 Michael Balcon, *Michael Balcon Presents*, London, 1969, p. 99. Tony Aldgate in 'Ideological Consensus in British Feature Films, 1935-47', in K.R.M. Short, ed., *Feature Films as History*, London, 1981, considers films, Michael Powell's *Red Ensign* (1934) and John Baxter's *Doss House* (1933) for example, to be 'moderately significant' in addressing social and political issues. This is the opposite of my view. I feel that they are only significant in the manner in which they avoid them.

2 Michael Powell, *A Life in Movies*, London, 1986, p. 234.

hundreds of British servicemen put into Southampton, only to be sent immediately off again with its disappointed servicemen. 'It was Wolfgang Wilhelm...who saw the possibilities of this incident and wrote an original story based on it.'¹ John Grierson, admired it as 'The only first-rate British script that has been seen recently...the only one, in fact, that has had the sense of timing, the sense of filmic bits and pieces about it, necessary to story telling on the screen.'² As the ship sails away to its new destination and families and lovers are left to cheer and wave from the quay, the band's playing of *Pack Up Your Troubles* moves into *Old Lang Syne*. *South Riding* (Victor Saville-LFP, 1938, dir. Saville) ends with the inauguration of a housing estate for the poor which has been timed to coincide with the Coronation of King George VI, a reminder 'that we can be proud of our country', a request that we 'remember those who have worked for the common good,' and the singing of Britain's second national anthem *Land of Hope and Glory*. Few have noticed the irony that BBFC may have emasculated criticism by insisting on scripts devoid of connotation but that the enthusiasm of the British public, as seen on the screen, is half-hearted and the crowds are seen to hardly cheer at all. The sound, as it was in newsreels, was added in the cutting rooms.

Undeniably these films had a social function and Tony Aldgate argues that many of them were part of a British domestic cinema of the thirties which contributed 'to the remarkable stability of British society during this period. It reflected and reinforced the dominant consensus and sought to generate adherence to the idea that society should continue to remain stable and cohesive as it changed over time'.³ It should be noted however that stability rather than change is by far their strongest feature. 'British film of the thirties,' writes Peter Stead

1 Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1959, pp. 195-6. Wilhelm had worked for Decla Bioscope, Berlin, and UFA and arrived in England in 1933. A brilliant initiator of ideas, in 1944 he unsuccessfully approached Launder and Gilliat with a project, *The Red Prophet*, in which Karl Marx was to be portrayed as a henpecked husband.

2 *KW*, 13 Jan. 1938.

3 Tony Aldgate, 'Comedy, Class and Containment: The British Domestic Cinema of the 1930s', in James Curran and Vincent Porter, eds., *British Cinema History*, p. 270.

did not come to terms with reality and largely responsible for that failure was the inability of film-makers to realise that social reality can only be meaningfully interpreted through individual experiences. The country in general and the film industry in particular seemed happy with a few general social assumptions. There is no sense in this cinema of history as process and experience or of society offering and being determined by options¹

We can now see that the cinema was part of a larger fabric and that it is misleading to see it as isolated or uniquely failing in its social obligations. Richard Cockett has written of the cavalier threats by which the British government restricted the BBC's coverage of foreign affairs after 1936 and of how Neville Chamberlain personally engineered the removal of its Director General Sir John Reith in 1938.² Just as surely as the Chamberlain government manipulated the press to maintain what the editor of the *Yorkshire Post* Arthur Mann described as “an extremely dangerous complacency in the nation,”³ the BBFC enervated British cinema from any sense of topicality. Jeffrey Richards shows that it disallowed scripts and screenplays which made references to Nazi Germany or made contemporary references to the international scene.⁴ This was naturally modified after August 1939, but thereafter the government sought control through the Ministry of Information and looked for a different emphasis. The British film industry of the period was paradoxically privately owned and functioning in a free market, yet controlled through government agencies.

The International Appeal of German Music

If there were social and political reasons for the anodyne content of British cinema of the 1930s, there are also technical reasons. The director Thorold Dickinson who was working as an editor in the early 1930s, has described the difficulties which sound

1 Peter Stead, 'The People and the Pictures', in *Propaganda, Politics and Film, 1918 -1945*, ed. Nicholas Pronay and D.W. Spring, London, 1982, p. 94.

2 Richard Cockett, op. cit., pp. 52-53 and 111-112. Reith was made head of Imperial Airways and cynically replaced at the BBC by Frederick W. Olgivie.

3 *Yorkshire Post*, 29 March, 1939, Quoted in Richard Cockett, op. cit., p. 107.

4 See, for example, Jeffrey Richards, 'The British Board of Film Censors and Content Control in the 1930s: foreign affairs', *HJF*, Vol. 2 No. 1, 1982, pp. 39-48.

introduced to the cutting room.¹ Initially cameras were lodged in large fixed and ‘clumsy sound-proof booths (from which cameramen sometimes fell out after ten minutes in a dead faint)’, the films had a single sound-track and everything from the orchestra in the background to the voice close to the microphone had to be recorded simultaneously and it could not be cut. Dickinson reminds us that the technological developments were to come from across the channel.

The Germans were in the best position to profit by the adoption of sound. Their Tri-Ergon sound system had been patented in 1919 and had been incorporated into Tobis-Klangfilm, the leading system in Germany.... Tobis got off to a head start once the time prove to be ripe. Moreover the German dominance in studio techniques, in design, building sets in perspective, simulation of outdoor scenes, trick work in and around the camera, gave them a confident lead in exploiting the limited resources of the sound-track to the full..... [In] the brief period from 1929 to 1933 the German attitude to the sound film was anything but conservative. In visuals they had the tradition of design and as for sound, music was in their blood..... The Germans gambled on the international appeal of their music. They reworked operettas and musical comedies into film continuity, recorded the music separately and played it back in the studio for the actors to match in mime. In these musical sequences the camera work could be as free and flexible as a silent film.²

Hence the influx of European technicians and artist to Britain in the early 1930s also points the way to one of the most significant developments in British cinema. The introduction of artists like Richard Tauber, Martha Eggerth, Jan Kiepura, Gitta Alpar, and Joseph Schmidt to British audiences suggested a new and more grandiose avenue for British cinema which was otherwise shackled with the incubus of primitive sound techniques. Schmidt had built a substantial reputation on radio and on record and made two films in Britain.³ Tauber although overweight and seemingly clumsy attracted an enormous following and made four, beginning with *Blossom*

1 Thorold Dickinson, *A Discovery of Cinema*, London, 1971, pp. 55-59.

2 Ibid. pp. 57-58..

3 Born in Rumania, Schmidt was nevertheless known as the ‘German’, sometimes as the ‘pocket Caruso’. He had an impressive voice, but ‘this tiny man with his large heavy face,’ as Low describes him, was unsuited for the screen. He came to England via Vienna and his films, *My Song Goes Round the World* (BIP 1934, dir. Richard Oswald) and *A Star Fell from Heaven*, (BIP 1936, dir. Paul Merzbach) both had music by Hans May. At the outbreak of war he was trapped in Belgium, but escaped to Switzerland where, in 1942, he died in internment.

Time in 1934.¹ Gitta Alpar a soprano who had been one of Berlin's leading divas before 1933 appeared in three undistinguished films.² Marta Eggerth and Jan Kiepura made three three films between them.³ When Curtis Bernhardt directed *The Beloved Vagabond* (Toeplitz 1936) the songs were written by Werner Richard Heyman 'who was a German Jewish boy and had written several big musicals for the German film industry — among them, *The Congress Dances* (*Der Kongress tanzt*).'⁴ Bernhardt 'was very sad' when Toeplitz hired 'Darius Milhaud, the well-known French composer — ultra modern...because I didn't want this kind of modern music.'⁵ He had wanted operetta. But none of these were associated with the kind of full-blown experimentation which was to come.

'One of these [German] "defectors"' wrote Michael Balcon 'was Hermann Fellner, a great mountain of a man whose booming voice and aggressive manner concealed a gentle spirit.... British film in general, and I personally, owed much to our association with him.'⁶ Fellner's name was to appear only rarely on the credits but he had been

1 Three of them are associated with Max Schach companies. She established herself in Berlin in 1927 as Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. She left Germany in 1933 and later went to America. Her husband, the actor Gustav Fröhlich, divorced her on the grounds that her Jewish origins were endangering his career. See *JC*, 15 Feb., 1935. Fröhlich sent out a request, via *PPB*, 12 Feb. 1946 that she should contact him with news of their daughter, Julika.

2 These were *I Give My Heart* (BIP 1935, dir. Marcel Varnel), a multi-lingual, *Guilty Melody* (Franco-London Films 1936, dir. Richard Potter), and *Everything in Life* (Tudor Films 1936, dir. J. Elder Wills).

3 As a married couple, their off-stage-off screen romance was part of their appeal. and they appeared together in *My Heart is Calling* (1935), which was an English version of *Mein Herz ruft nach Dir Mon Cœur t'appelle*, which had been made in Germany in 1934. and scripted and co-produced by Emeric Pressburger. Kiepura and Eggerth left for the USA before the war..

4 Curtis Bernhardt in Mary Kiersch, *Curtis Bernhardt, Interviewed*, London, 1986, p. 65. Heyman (né Heimann). Low credits Mireille Heimann. It was partly shot in the French Studio in Nice and partly on the Riviera.

5 Ibid. Milhaud, a member of 'Les Six', along with Honegger, Auric, and Poulenc, also went to America.

6 Michael Balcon, 'A Personal Tribute', in Geoff Brown, ed., *Walter Forde*, London, 1977, p. 1. He had, Balcon recalls an office in the 'Polish Corridor' of Gaumont-British, as 'befitted his status' and spent much of his time 'in his favourite activity of telephoning his business associates in most of the world's capitals' shouting out at the top of his voice. He had produced the German version of *Sunshine Susie* (Gainsborough 1931, dir. Victor Saville) and *Die Privatsekretärin* in 1931, which Wilhelm Thiele had directed and had taken many British stars, including Jack

one of the ‘undoubtedly great impresarios’ of musical comedy in Berlin, bringing the *Merry Widow* to London.¹ Wilhelm Thiele, who had worked for him in Berlin was to direct a derivative of Johann Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus* for him in London, *Waltz Time* (1933). He had “sold” the idea to Michael Balcon.² Twenty years later it was still being developed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger who reworked it as *Oh Rosalinda!* with Anton Walbrook. *En route* they had played with the idea of pre-recorded sound in *Black Narcissus*, *The Red Shoes*, and in what was became the high-water mark of this development, *The Tales of Hoffmann* (1951).

The First Screen Opera.

The history of *The Tales of Hoffmann* begins with *The Robber Symphony* (Concordia 1936 dir. Friedrich Feher), which is a pivotal film in British Cinema. It is described by Elliot Stein as ‘one of the great and delightful eccentricities of European cinema in the thirties’.³ Yet although its influence leads directly to the post-war films of Powell-Pressburger films, it is virtually unknown in Britain. Its photographer Eugene Schüfftan who ‘used arc lights more dramatically than most, but he could shade and tone with them as well,’⁴ had worked with Fritz Lang, notably on *Metropolis* (1927); its designer Ernö Metzner an early victim of Nazism,⁵ had been Pabst’s art director in Germany. It was publicised as the ‘first screen opera,’⁶ and the

Hulbert, Cicely Courtneidge and Sonnie Hale to Germany to appear in films. Fellner killed himself in 1936.

1 Louis Levy, *Music for the Movies*, London, 1948, p. 106.

2 Ibid. Some ‘of the music as written by Strauss was of little value for the film version.’ and Levy produced some of his own. After *Waltz Time*, *Die Fledermaus* became *Gay Rosalinda* and eventually *O Rosalinda!* for Powell and Pressburger in 1955.

3 Léon Barzacq, *Caligari’s Cabinet*, New York, 1976, p. 228.

4 Erwin Hillier, interview with author, 16 April 1987.

5 In England, he advertised for work in *Close Up*, Sept., 1933, ‘.... Obligated to Cease Work in Germany.... Seeks English Contracts.’

6 *KW*, 9 Jan. 1936.

first 'composed' film.¹ During its première screening it was, self-damningly, said to improve with acquaintance and a second visit was half-price.² Few took up the offer and the film failed commercially. Even the sympathetic *The Jewish Chronicle* counted it only as 'a partial success', especially as it felt that the music 'was not strong or attractive enough' to demand concentration.

Feher who had been a precocious musician, was conducting opera by the time he was fifteen but soon turned to acting and appeared for the Deutsches Theater, in Berlin, Vienna and Paris. By 1914 he was appearing in films and after the war he made a notable appearance in *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* which 'owing to the illness of Dr. Wiene, he almost completely directed.'³ He acted little afterwards although he did appear in Wiene's admired silent version of *Der Rosenkavalier* (1926), which was shown accompanied by its musical score. In 1924 -1925 he was briefly director of the Renaissance Theatre Vienna, and thereafter concentrated on the cinema, frequently working with his wife Magda Sonja.⁴ By the time he left Germany he had directed twenty-four films and both *Ihre Junge* (1930) and *Gehetzte Menschen La Loup Garou* (1932) indicate the direction of his thought. He wrote the scores and his wife and young son appeared in both.⁵

Once in London he formed Concordia films, a £25 000 company in which he was the majority shareholder, with the intention of producing 'composed' films with pre-recorded musical sound-tracks which were virtually dialogue-free.⁶ Technically, as we have seen pre-recording allowed greater creative flexibility with the camera. Its business manager and a co-director was 'a prominent member of the Sussex CEA

1 *JC*, 12 June, 1936.

2 *JC*, 22 May 1936.

3 *KW*, 22 Aug., 1935. Wiene's authority as director has often been questioned.

4 His films as director included *Sensations-Prozeß* (1928) and *Gehetzte Menschen* (1932).

5 *Gehetzte Menschen* was taken from a novel by Alfred Marchard. For all the talk about the successful careers which refugees were to make for themselves, Feher's is another example of a career destroyed by forced immigration. He made only one film in Britain and went to America where he directed some musical shorts and appeared as an actor in *Jive Junction* (1945).

6 Formed 21 Dec. 1934. Offices were at 80 Regent St. in 1936. A year later they were at 27 Old Bond Street.

branch' Harold B. Millar,¹ a director of Rellim Theatres Ltd., who one would have expected to warn Feher of his folly but who seems to have merely kept 'a showman's eye upon the work.'² Astoundingly its programme included a 'revised and improved' version of *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari*, not with dialogue, but with 'a descriptive musical and sound score' which Feher was to compose and to which Robert Wiene, who co-ordinated the production for *The Robber Symphony*, was to supply the visuals.³ Most likely, Feher only intended pre-scoring *Caligari* in order to preserve the visual quality and movement of the original but we cannot be certain as it was never produced. Wiene had been trying to re-launch his career with a reworking of *Caligari* for some years, but it never left the ground.⁴ By 1938 he was dead.⁵

For the film-maker the advent of multi-track tape recording has reduced the technical problems associated with filming to play-back, and none of the previously daunting difficulties remain. In 1935 however Feher was breaking new ground with *The Robber Symphony*, which although it was made in both French and English versions could not appropriately be call a bi-lingual. Apart from his wife and son the cast included Oscar Asche, George Graves, Webster Booth and Michael Martin Harvey. The story tells of the fantastic adventures of Gianniono the young son of an itinerant musician who, unknown to himself, is carrying 12 500 ducats stolen from a

1 *KW*, 22 Aug., 1935.

2 *KW*, 22 Aug., 1935. A third director was Joseph B. Ellison.

3 *KW*, 9 Jan., 1936. Wiene certainly worked on *The Robber Symphony*, but there is nothing to confirm his actual role. Some believe he supervised the production, but this is unlikely. Gifford credits him as producer, but there is, again, no supporting evidence. Probably, he was production manager. Wiene, according to Hans Feld, 'was actually brought in [to Britain] as consultant to Alexander Korda; however nothing happened because he didn't have the sine qua non of Hungarian origin.' ['Er wurde gelegentlich als Konsultant von Alexander Korda zugezogen; ihm fehlte jedoch die sine qua non der ungarischen Herkunft.'], letter to Dr. Fürstnau, 19 Oct., 1969. There is no supporting evidence that Korda ever considered employing Wiene.

4 According to Paul Kohner in a letter to Hans Janowitz in the late 1940s, Wiene was trying to remake *Caligari* through a company called Rex Films, 13, St. James Place, as early as 1934, Letter from Uli Jung to author, 12 Sept., 1988. No record of the company or negotiations with it seem to have survived.

5 He had gone to France to direct *Ultimatum* with Erich von Stroheim, but died, a disappointed man, in Paris on 17 July, 1938.

a fortune teller in his transportable pianola. Eventually the leading thief, an innkeeper, is arrested and his mother who was wrongfully charged as complicit in the robbery is released. Members of the London Symphony Orchestra, dressed in bowler hats and donning false moustaches, play the robbers. Visually it was ambitious with sequences being shot in Nice, in Austria, on the Mer de Glace on Mont Blanc, and at Shepperton, but it was expensive and according to Graham Greene, 600 000 feet [over 111 hours] of film was exposed.¹ The final film ran for 140 minutes but the story contained too much whimsy and after its initial press screening it was further reduced to a modest 90 minutes, with less than 300 spoken words. The music which was conceived 'as the real central factor in the film'² had not reduced the technical problems but added to them. Low points out that when the idea was first mooted 'in the early thirties the sound track was still fairly immature. But by 1937, when the cut version was finally available for showing, considerable progress had been made...and the experiment would have seemed very strange to most audiences.'³ She is right to draw our attention to this, but the technical details would have passed over the heads of most audiences. In reality *The Robber Symphony*, with its 'Disneyish' flavour appears coy to modern audiences, and the music is, at best, charming⁴.

For Michael Powell it pointed a way forward, and suggested a technical approach whereby he could provide the narrative film with the structural base which was not dependent on a screen writer. Powell came to consider the writer as essentially non-visual and gradually became convinced 'that writers were not able to be good writers of cinema, because they would always return to the word. Composers, on the other

1 Rachael Low, *Film Making*, p. 126. Thus an astounding 600 000 feet of film was reduced to 8 150 a ratio of more than 73:1. Low doesn't question the figure but the more likely figure is 60 000 feet and would provide a more believable ratio.

2 *KW*, 22 Aug. 1935.

3 Low, op. cit., p. 126. Even before *The Robber Symphony* was under way mixing and re-recording had been introduced and it was already possible to combine a number of separate sound tracks. It certainly has its admirers, see for example: T. M. F. Steen, 'The Sound Track', *FiR* Oct., 1961; Claude Mauriac, *L'Amour du Cinema*, Paris, 1954, p. 146-8; Jean d'Yvoire, 'Du Rococo Autrichien a la Symphonie des Brigands' in *Baroque et Cinema*, Henri Agel and George-Albert Astre, eds., Paris, 1960, pp. 99-108; Leslie Shepard, 'The Robber Symphony: A Neglected Masterpiece', *Flickers*, Dec., 1990, pp. 11-12.

4 Shepard, op. cit., considers the possibility that Walt Disney was inspired by it in his making of *Fantasia* (1940), and there are echoes of *Pinocchio* as well.

hand...did write good films.'¹ He had not, so he claims, seen *The Robber Symphony* but he was 'haunted' by it 'and longed for a film subject where music was the master'.² *The Tales of Hoffmann* which was shot entirely to play-back, was so Powell argues, the culmination of a dream which began with Feher's film fifteen years earlier.³

Nevertheless, as we shall see, there is an element of afterthought in Powell's recollections and there were other European influences on him which were far more direct and compelling than that of a film he claims never to have seen. In 1936 *Hoffmann* was a long way off, and most likely Powell paid little attention to Feher's only film in Britain as, after a long series of Quota films he was primarily occupied in directing another inexpensive but this time an important film in his career, *The Edge of the World* (Rock, 1937).⁴ His next film however was to be the turning point of his career and a consideration of its genesis throws considerable light on the way in which films were often produced in the 1930s, the nature of influence in the cinema and, in particular the way in which Alexander Korda realized his productions.

1 Interview in Michael Powell, in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, Brussels, 1973, p. 20. 'The more experience I had, the more convinced I became that composers and film makers think very much alike. Their tempos are very closely related to our cutting tempos, their longueurs and their statements are very similar to ours...even with a writer as clever and subtle as Emeric, I always had this continual battle with words,' Ibid.

2 Powell, *A Life in Movies*, op. cit. p. 582. Privately, Powell admitted to the author that he had seen it at the Palace Theatre, Powell to author, 20 July 1987.

3 A cynical observer might consider that the farce, *The Perfect Woman* (Two Cities 1949, dir. Bernard Knowles) in which Patricia Roc poses as a robot is closer to a British version of Hoffmann's *Olympia*.

4 Korda has seen and liked it. It was made under the The Dixey scheme which was a method of distribution, through British Independent Exhibitors Distribution, whereby cheap Quota films were funded by exhibitors. It was devised by Arthur. C. N. Dixey (1889-1954), a solicitor and Conservative MP for Penrith and Cockermouth division, 1923 until his retirement in 1935. Low, *Film Making*, p. 11, incorrectly, writes of him as if he was still an MP at this time. Powell's film, objectively cheap, was relatively expensive in the company of BIED's other films.

Alexander Korda, Ludwig Berger and *The Thief of Bagdad*.

Walt Disney's feature cartoon *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) had combined two important developments into a feature film, Technicolor and pre-recorded sound. Above all it demonstrated that it was possible for the film-maker to be the master of, and not the victim of, new technology which had been as Thorold Dickinson observed 'introduced, not as a stimulus to the mind of cinema but wholly as a physical stunt, like the widening of the screen later on, as a desperate effort to break a log-jam, to bring back the dwindling audience to the cinema.'¹ Dickinson writes that many of the purists who were among the *avant-garde* of silent film who scorned the sound-track as a typical Hollywood vulgarity, but we can state categorically that Korda was not one of them and recognised that *Snow White* opened new commercial opportunities. Powell was inspired by it and was to describe Disney as 'in a world of his own, the greatest genius of us all'² who 'did a tremendous amount for the cinema. No one will ever realise how much he restored of what had been lost [with the introduction of sound].'³ The sound cartoon, noted the authoritative writer Kurt London, as early as 1936

offers at the present time far the best and most perfect impression of the musical film, since it combines music, song, words, and incidental noises with the pictures into one stylised finished whole in absolute rhythmic uniformity. Walt Disney created the classic films of this category...a proof of the great art by which unity of sound and picture can be attained. The way in which idea, movement, and music were blended in them into a perfect harmony, gave an aesthetic pleasure which was renewed with each showing of such a film; it was also a pointer in the problem of how sound-films should be construed.⁴

1 Thorold Dickinson, op. cit., p. 35.

2 Michael Powell, 'Your Questions Answered', *Penguin Film Review*, London, pp. 102-110.

3 Interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, op. cit.

4 Kurt London, *Film Music*, London, 1936, p. 149. London, a composer, had been a music critic in Germany; 1929, editor of *Der Film*; 1932 initiated an institute for sound film, radio, disc. He came to England in 1935. He also wrote on the political scene.

Korda grasped the opportunity to exploit the possibilities that Technicolor offered and by May 1937 tests were completed ‘for the first big musical to be made by LFP’¹ but nothing further was heard of it. The tests however almost certainly proved useful for *The Thief of Bagdad*, which began 18 months later.²

The Thief of Bagdad ‘was conceived as a tremendous spectacle, an epic fairy tale with an international appeal, and its budget was as spectacular as its scope’, wrote Korda’s biographer Karol Kulik and he ‘chose the German Ludwig Berger to direct this extravaganza.’³ In this way, *The Thief of Bagdad* would seem to to have been plucked out of the air and, even its eventually credited co-director, Michael Powell has not disabused the student of this version of events. We can already see, however that its development was far more complicated. Kulik continues that Korda wanted to ‘exploit several things: the popularity of Korda’s two major stars, Conrad Veidt and Sabu; the technical expertise of Denham’s special effects department; and, above all, the lavishness of Georges Périnal’s colour cinematography and Vincent Korda’s colour art direction’⁴ There is certainly truth in this, but there were other forces in play.

The Thief of Bagdad was one of three extravagant colour projects which Korda announced and the only one to reach the screen. How did this happen and how did Ludwig Berger who, by all accounts, was an unsuitable choice as director come to be Korda’s favoured choice? We must look elsewhere for the answer, for we can now see that *The Thief of Bagdad* progressed with the usual stumbling organisation which characterises British films of the period and that Berger was not its originally intended director at all.

Hidden in the columns of *Kine Weekly* of 10 November, 1938 is a reference to Sabu the boy actor who ‘on November 5, had his first singing lesson from Topliss Green,

1 *Coronet* was to start in July, 1937, see *KW* 24 June, 1937. It was to be directed by Harry D’Arrast, a difficult personality, who was out of favour in Hollywood and did not work from 1934 until his death in 1968.

2 *KW*, 20 May 1937.

3 Kulik, *Alexander Korda*, p. 224.

4 *Ibid.*

famous baritone and professor at the Royal College of Music.’¹ Sabu is to ‘sing in his next film, *The Thief of Bagdad* in which he will appear with Jon Hall, Conrad Veidt and Vivien Leigh. The music...is not yet written.... Marc Allégret, the director, is preparing the picture.’² Although Korda was interested in the concept there is no suggestion of pre-scoring the sound-track and all the indications are that *The Thief of Bagdad* was being planned for a conventionally written score, namely one written after the film had been shot. As we now know Vivien Leigh did not appear and Marc Allégret did not direct the film. According to Miklós Rózsa who had recently completed a successful score for *The Four Feathers*, sometime in late 1938, an appreciative Korda had invited him to his office given him a large increase in salary and told him that he was to be its composer.³ Once more it was not to be so straightforward and we again need to retrace our steps.

In May 1937, *Kine* announced that the German producer, Günther Stapenhorst had just joined London Films to act as co-producer with Korda on several productions. ‘His first production is scheduled to be a ballet film with Merle Oberon, directed by Ludwig Berger.’⁴ This important proclamation seems to have been overlooked by historians of British cinema, but it should guide us towards a reconsideration of the way in which pre-recorded cinema came to be developed by Powell and Pressburger and the way in which Berger became contracted to Korda for *The Thief of Bagdad*.

Stapenhorst had been a naval Flag-Commander fighting in the Battle of Jutland and after WW1 was assigned to arrange the reduction in Germany’s armed forces, including his own demise.⁵ He turned to trading during the Russian Revolution, bartering for furniture, jewellery, paintings, and other valuables, which aristocrats were selling off in order to survive. On one or two occasions he was able to offer to

1 *KW*, 10 Nov., 1938.

2 Ibid. Paul Robeson was originally to play the Djinni, who was eventually played by the actor Rex Ingram, see *The Times*, 3 Dec., 1938.

3 Miklos Rózsa, *Double Life*, Tunbridge Wells, 1984, p. 77.

4 *KW*, 27 May 1937, p. 49.

5 See ‘Jutland Challenge,’ *Sunday Despatch*, 23 Feb. 1930. Low, op. cit., p. 222, mistakenly thinks that Stapenhorst was a U-boat commander..

the Russians a rare commodity raw film stock which aroused his interest in film-making,¹ and eventually he decided to enter film production. Although he produced two films directed by Conrad Wiene and Martin Berger, and starring Hans Albers and Conrad Veidt, his first adventure turned out to be a swindle and he was happy to accept a producer's contract with UFA. After 1933, Pommer and Alfred Zeisler were removed by the Nazis and two years later he took the opportunity to become production manager 'for a series of Cricklewood pictures which never matured.'² In London Carl Zuckmayer³ introduced him to Korda and Stapenhorst in turn took the opportunity to employ two associates from Berlin. The first of these was Ludwig Berger who in 1933 had directed *Der Walzerkrieg* for him at UFA with Renate Müller,⁴ Willy Fritsch, Paul Hörbiger and Adolph Wohlbrück⁵ in the cast. The other was the writer Emeric Pressburger who had written or co-written *Abschied, Emil und die Detektive*, *Ronny* and *Das Schöne Abenteuer*. Pressburger produced the screenplay for the ballet film; it was UFA at Denham.

1 Interview with Margarita Stapenhorst, 12 Aug., 1987.

2 *KW*, 14 March, 1935, p. 55; *KW*, 30 April, 1936, p. 37.

3 Zuckmayer, in Vienna, had earned his 'bread doing movie work for...Korda' in Spring 1934 and was brought to London by Korda from Zurich who sent him 'a handsome sum in sterling — although he owed me no money....' It was a genuine advance and Korda did not deduct it from the next contract but the one after that; Carl Zuckmayer, *A Part of Myself*, London, 1970, pp.38-75. Bergner also offered him money. Kulik, op cit., p. 154, is, therefore mistaken in thinking that Korda first approached Zuckmayer in 1936 to write scenarios. The scripts were, Kulik tells us, narrative treatments of eight - ten pages, written in German which Korda had reworked.

4 This, and his previous film *Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht* (1932) were both musicals. Berger already had a substantial theatre career behind him by the time he began directing for UFA in the early 1920s. By 1927 he was in Hollywood where he directed films with Pola Negri, Emil Jannings and Maurice Chevalier, but by 1933 he was back in Europe. A film he completed in Holland, *Frgens in Nederland* (Somewhere in Holland), which was produced by Rudolph Meyer and written by Jan de Hartog, barely saw the light of day. It was seen in Amsterdam on 12 April 1940 and was to open in Antwerp in May but it was not shown and it was subsequently banned by the Nazis. Berger, on a satellite passport, spent the rest of the war in semi-hiding in his house in Vondelpark, Amsterdam. In 1945, de Hartog smuggled him, 'a man of incorruptible integrity and a teacher of genius' into Britain to advise him on his play, *Death of a Rat*, which was being produced at the Lyric, Hammersmith by Murray MacDonald starring Pamela Brown and Alistair Sim. Berger was uncomplimentary and quickly despatched back to Holland. Jan de Hartog, interview with author, 19 Oct. 1987.

5 Anton Walbrook.

The ballet film, 'Merle Oberon's ballet subject,' as *Kine* called it,¹ was planned to go into production shortly after *Coronet* in July 1937. G.B. Stern was 'preparing the script [the scenario] from an original story of hers dealing with the life of a Russian dancer. G[ünther]. Stapenhorst is co-producing and Ludwig Berger is the director.'² A ballet film was one of Berger's specialities. His early reputation in the cinema had derived from a version of *Cinderella/Der verlorene Schuh* 'which transferred the ancient fairy tale to the screen with many arabesques and detours...' ³ Siegfried Kracauer described him as someone who was trained 'in romanticizing the past,' and 'had staged *Ein Walzertraum (Waltz Dream, 1925)* after an operetta by Oscar Strauss (sic) — one of the few German films to become a hit in America. [It] established that enchanted Vienna which was to haunt the screen from then on'.⁴ Berger had been moving in the direction of the pre-recorded film for some time and had worked closely with Straus. They were to be respectively director and composer of Korda's tribute to Merle Oberon *Tempest Within*.⁵ But Korda's liabilities were rising and the film collapsed. *Tempest Within* lay dormant until after the war when Pressburger and Powell purchased from Korda and turned it into *The Red Shoes*.⁶

1 *KW*, 17 June, 1937. Stapenhorst had no more luck at LFP; *The Court Waltzes*, in which the young Queen Victoria was to introduce to the waltzes of Strauss to the Court at Buckingham Palace was among the films that were cancelled. 'The Court of the young Queen at Buckingham Palace, as seen through the eyes of a Frenchman, might possibly be offensive in this country to older patrons' was the observation from BBFC, Quoted in *Daily Express*, 19 June, 1937. Victoria did dance, however, in *Victoria the Great* (1937). Stapenhorst and Pressburger did respectively produce and write *The Challenge* (LFP 1938, dir. Milton Rosmer and Luis Trenker), one of Trenker's 'mountain' films.

2 *KW*, 24 June, 1937.

3 Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, New York, 1947, pp. 107-108. It had been designed by his brother Rudolph Bamberger 'with a pronounced symmetry', with doorways, etc. always set in the middle of the screen. Kracauer makes the point that the films conceive the "'better future"' as return to the good old days.'

4 Ibid. p. 141. Berger's other films of delicate fantasy included *Der verlorene Schuh (Cinderella 1923)* and *The Vagabond King* (1930).

5 There is no written evidence to prove that Straus was to be its composer but everything points to it.

6 Pressburger and Powell, interviews in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, London, 1971. Powell described it this way: 'Alex, who had made a great star of Merle Oberon was in love with her as well, wanted her to play the ballerina and a very well-known ballerina was to do

At the end of 1938 just prior to his meeting with Rózsa Korda's financial difficulties with LFP had led to the loss of Denham the studio he had created. His financial backers the Prudential Assurance Company arranged for its amalgamation with Pinewood Studios under Richard Norton.¹ Korda was close to losing everything and Stapenhorst departed to form his own production company Carlton films.² Nevertheless, Korda had managed to hold on to some of his projects but was without a company and once more searching for production finance. There were rumours of a Rothschild investment³ but nothing came of it and the crisis for Korda continued. Two of the three colour extravaganzas were abandoned; only *The Thief of Bagdad*, the most obviously commercial of the three went ahead. Although he still had a controlling interest in Denham Laboratories and a partnership in United Artists, Korda went into the production of *The Thief of Bagdad* seriously underfunded. His new company Alexander Korda Productions was launched in March 1939, once more with Prudential money behind him and took over a production which had already started. In all likelihood Korda still proposed going ahead with Allégret as its director with Rózsa as its composer, but Rózsa was not being given an entirely free hand for in January 1939 the composer Mischa Spoliansky, who had helped provide Korda with one of his major successes *Sanders of the River* (LFP 1935 dir. Zoltan Korda), was also engaged 'to write compose adapt and arrange...themes songs compositions and arrangements...for use in...*Thief of Baghdad* (sic).⁴ The reasons are not known, but

all the dancing..... Emeric brought it up after the war.... So we bought it back from Korda.' Pressburger had earned about £2 000 in salary, writing it for Korda and they purchased it back for £12 000, see interviews 22. Sept. and 12 Nov. 1970, Ibid.

1 Kulik, op. cit., pp. 218-221.

2 He looked for co-production arrangements and finally went into production in Paris, late in 1939. Cut off by the war, he was unable to return to Britain and escaped with his family, using British Registration cards, to Zurich, where he spent the war; letter from Margarita Stapenhorst to author, 30 Aug., 1987.

3 *KW*, 24 June, 1937.

4 Spoliansky-Korda contract dated 12 Jan., 1939. Spoliansky was to be paid £600 in forty equal instalments of £15, commencing 1 Jan., 1939. This is a personal contract made two months before Korda established Alexander Korda Film Productions.

we can now be certain that the story, as Rózsa believes it and as writers have previously thought, is incomplete.¹ The smallness of the fee indicates that Korda wanted Spoliansky to write the songs and possibly some of the incidental music. Perhaps Rózsa was to write the rest, but no one knows what was in Korda's mind.² It was not the first time in which Spoliansky had been squeezed out by Rózsa, whose film composing career may be said to have started with it. Rózsa had been composing music for the Markova-Dolin Ballet in London when Jacques Feyder whom he had met in Paris arrived to direct *Knight Without Armour* with Marlene Dietrich and Robert Donat. Feyder pressed Rózsa on to a reluctant Korda who 'had someone else in mind, a composer who had already worked for him'³ He was referring to Spoliansky, his composer for *The Ghost Goes West* amongst others and someone who had worked with Dietrich in Berlin. Rózsa felt that it hadn't hurt to be Hungarian.

Kulik assumes that had Korda been fully acquainted with his previous work he would not have made the mistake of appointing Berger director of *The Thief of Bagdad*, but Korda was not an entirely free agent. 'It was the spring of 1939,' wrote Paul Tabori 'and there was a great deal of confusion around the studio. Korda had founded his own company; war was threatening and one director after another was sacked as they were found unsuitable by the new financial backers.'⁴ We can be confident that Allégret was one of those whom Korda or his financiers tried and found wanting. Directors 'came and went,' wrote Rózsa, 'Korda tried several for a couple

1 Rózsa does not mention Spoliansky's early association with the film.

2 Cue sheets for other Korda films show that composers were used more flexibly than the credits on the films suggest.

3 Miklos Rózsa, op. cit., p. 65. Spoliansky had composed the two important shows *Es Liegt in der Luft* and *Zwei Krawatten*, in which Dietrich had starred, and had helped launch her career. A Russian by birth, he would have found no difficulty in producing a Russian Gypsy song for Dietrich; Rózsa, a fledgling film-composer, with only *Thunder in the City* behind him had to scour London for examples. 'They weren't unlike Hungarian gypsy (sic) music,' he writes, 'nearly all in a minor key and drenched in the same sickening melancholia and sentimentality,' see Miklos Rózsa, op. cit., p. 67. *Knight Without Armour* was originally intended as a Penderennis production, with Erich Pommer directing 'with his own unit' and Merle Oberon as the female star; see *JC* 17 April 1936.

4 Paul Tabori, op. cit., p. 212.

of weeks each but couldn't decide on the right one. Eventually he announced that he had settled for a German.... Dr. Ludwig Berger [who] had recently made *Les Trois Valses* in Paris with music by Oscar Straus, the famous Austrian composer of operettas....¹ For Rózsa 'film music meant Honegger's score for *Les Misérables*'² and he writes contemptuously of Straus's compositions but it would not have escaped Korda's notice that Straus may well have needed a helping hand for all of his songs 'which were especially popular in Austria' had been banned and 'will in future be omitted from the school song-books'.³

From a purely business perspective Korda may have seen the attraction of a pre-scored film of the Disney variety without appreciating the difficulties in making it. Whatever happened Berger proceeded along the same line as he would have adopted for *Tempest Within*. Berger 'the distinguished Continental film producer' noted *Kine* 'has been made associate producer as well as director of *The Thief of Baghdad* (sic).' He 'is a great musician and has produced several operas on the Continent, has a revolutionary scheme for shooting the music first on *The Thief of Bagdad*.... It will be an unusual experience to see Conrad Veidt, Sabu, June Duprez and John Justin acting their scene on the set to music.... It is to be 'the first time that a full musical score will be played back and the sound "mixed" on the set.⁴ Like Feher's *Robber Symphony* and like Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *The Thief of Bagdad* was to have the score written first. It was to provide a musical structure and provide the rhythm by which the characters moved.⁵

Berger much to Rózsa's displeasure was adamant that he wanted to use the music of Straus. Straus, 'Der Nosenkavalier' to his friends, who at the turn of the century had been resident composer at one of the Berlin cabaret-type theatres, Überbrettl, was

1 Miklós Rózsa, op. cit., p. 77. Straus had written for films since 1930, notably for Lubitsch's *The Smiling Lieutenant* and *One Hour With You*.

2 Ibid. p. 66.

3 *The Times*, Nov. 18 1938, p. 15. Straus had become a French citizen.

4 *KW*, 8 July, 1939, p. 29.

5 Play-back would have been to wax disc.

not only a great composer of light music' wrote Eric Maschwitz but 'one of the most endearing personalities available.'¹ He did not come over but remained in Vichy where he 'was taking a cure' and sent the score to England. Thus there was no possibility of a dialogue between the collaborators and Straus inadvertently contributed towards the subsequent chaos. Korda sought a compromise whereby 'all the pre-production music would be written by Straus, all the dramatic and colouristic music would be written by me [Rózsa]'²

The making of the film was full of jealousies and the characteristic scheming of the industry. Powell who in spite of a long series of 'quota' films was still little more than a fledgeling director, 'unknown and afraid of nothing', as he described himself, was to learn a great deal.³ Writing in his memoirs he discloses that his involvement on it, shooting the exteriors in Cornwall with Osmond Borrodaile as his photographer, was made to appear 'like a harmless second-unit expedition', yet it 'sapped Dr. Berger's authority'.⁴ Certainly it damaged the delicate consistency for which Berger was striving, for Korda was trying to persuade Berger towards a more commercial approach. He hadn't anticipated Berger's principled position, for Berger whom Powell describes as 'a learned, pedantic, patient, professorial talent' was a remarkable innovator in the theatre and on the screen. He designed his films as art objects which were perfectly crafted and uncontaminated by reality; the studio helped create an ethereal idealised world.⁵ Berger wanted to shoot the whole of *The Thief of Bagdad* in

1 Eric Maschwitz, *No Chip on My Shoulder*, London, 1957, p. 156-157. Straus (1870-1954) was frequently mistaken for Johann Strauss and 'was too amiable and too idle' to explain otherwise. He would sit down and play 'his...*Blue Danube*' waltz.

2 Rózsa, op. cit., p. 78. This is a similar arrangement to that he had wanted with Spoliansky.

3 Powell, op. cit., p. 323. He recognises that *The Spy in Black*, for example, was 'little more than an expanded quota-quickie,' p. 315.

4 Ibid. p. 323.

5 Kracauer, op. cit., pp. 107-108. Kracauer writes that *Der verlorene Schuh* (*Cinderella*) only emphasized the escapist character of his work. 'However, this never-never land was not beyond the world of politics.' The seemingly apolitical perspective of Powell's own films show how close Berger's and Powell's imaginations were.

the studio without any locations at all, a concept which was to later to appeal strongly to Powell.¹ Indeed, it is how Powell came to approach his own films.

Powell is described as a 'second unit' director on *The Thief by Kine* less than a month after Berger's involvement was first mentioned in the trade press.² There is a tendency now to see *The Thief of Bagdad* as a film which displays Powell's innovative brilliance and one to which he made a major contribution,³ but prior to the making of *49th Parallel*, in 1941, as he admits in his autobiography, he had been a humble contract director for Korda earning £60 per week.⁴ A close study of *The Thief* confirms that Powell's contribution to it did not displace Berger's influence. There were other things which did, namely the abandonment of Straus's music and Korda's move to America.

1 *Black Narcissus* (1947) is a case in point. There is little location work in any of his films made immediately after the war.

2 *KW*, 8 July, 1939, p. 29.

3 Ian Christie, *Arrows of Desire*, London, 1985, p. 50, for example, see above. Its photographer Georges Perin and its designer Vincent Korda were certainly more important than Powell.

4 Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 357. He had, however, long been seen as a 'white-hope' of British films and grasped the opportunity which the war offered him. When *The Times* wrote that the film had created little interest abroad and questioned the time and money that had been spent on *49th Parallel*, he was quick to respond. There 'has been no opportunity for the film to "stir the imagination" of other countries. It will not be released in Canada or the other Dominions until later this month, nor in the United States until next month In this country alone the film has already earned its entire production cost in the first three months of its exhibition. This is a most remarkable achievement for a feature film', *The Times*, 13 Jan, 1942. Its success was all the more spectacular as the Select Committee of National Expenditure had expected it to be money down the drain. Receipts from the commercial distribution for *49th Parallel* to the Exchequer, through the Ministry of Information from 1940-41 to 1943-44 (approx.) were £116 432: see INF — 199 158182. *The Next of Kin* had contributed a remarkable £95 308, *The Lion Has Wings* £25 140. This last, the first feature length film of the war had been financed by Korda himself, who is said to have pawned his last Life Insurance Policy to fund it, is described by Harry Watt, Elizabeth Sussex, *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary*, London, 1975, p. 120 as 'a ghastly bloody film' with the star dressed in white overalls and everyone else in black. Films from Crown Film Unit and the Army Film Unit, especially *Target for Tonight* and *Desert Victory*, also brought in creditable amounts.

Powell, who was to become one of a multitude of directors with a hand in the film's making¹ recalled

I wasn't to direct it, I was to start the film really because [Korda] realised, by then...that Ludwig Berger...wanted to make...a film more like the famous version of *Cinderella*.... [He] was a very stylised director...and Alex realised that he wasn't going to get the film he wanted which was a great big coloured fantasy...[Berger] showed me the tests he had made of the actors, which were fabulous. They were the best dialogue tests of actors with movement and mime...that I've ever seen done...²

Hence the chaos associated with the Berger experiment, which was a significant example of Korda's style of management,³ did not dampen Powell's experimental enthusiasms.

Straus's music 'was impossible', wrote Miklós Rózsa.⁴ 'It was...typical turn-of-the-century Viennese candy-floss.'⁵ He expressed his, perhaps not disinterested opinion of Straus's score as 'completely unsuitable for an oriental fantasy.'⁶ Some of Straus's music had, no doubt, survived from the original project of *The Tempest Within*, but Rózsa was certainly being sniffy about a popular composer. He was in the second generation of film composers, more of a symphonic composer like Karol Rathaus, Max Steiner and Korngold, less of a provider of incidental music as were Spoliansky, Straus and Allan Gray all of whom had worked in the cabarets of Berlin and could produce seemingly extemporized music. Korda was obliged to take sides. In a mock drama staged in Korda's office and, seemingly for Berger's benefit, the musical team was to experience an example of Korda's legendary 'manipulative diplomacy'. Rózsa and Korda's musical director, Muir Mathieson, received a dressing down and were told 'I want it clearly understood by the pair of you that in all artistic

1 Directors include Berger, Powell, Tim Whelan, William Cameron Menzies, and Zoltan and Alexander Korda. Sir Arthur Bliss's score for *Things to Come*, partly preceded the film, as well.

2 Michael Powell, interview with author, *Michael Powell: In Collaboration*, op cit.

3 See, for example, the report by F.M. Guedella to United Artists in America, quoted in Tino Balio, *United Artists*, London, 1976, pp. 145-6.

4 Rózsa, op. cit., 1982, p. 78.

5 Ibid. p. 78.

6 Ibid, p. 79.

matters the sole and final arbiter is Dr. Berger. Is that quite clear?’ and dismissed them.¹ In all the back-biting ‘Mathieson stormed out in a rage and Dr. Berger went away grinning like a Cheshire cat.’² But Korda didn’t mean any of it and Berger and Straus were forced from the picture.³ ‘In the end the only sequences shot to pre-composed music were those involving special effects.— the gallop of the Flying Horse and the Silvermaid’s Dance’.⁴ It was less that Korda and Berger were antipathetic to each other than that Korda’s ideas and aspirations for *The Thief* developed as the film progressed.

The unsettled political situation had led Korda to employ Sir Robert Vansittart⁵ and Winston Churchill in the late 1930s and the production was infected with war anxiety. Vansittart, who provide the lyrics for the film, is described by Miklós Rózsa as ‘chief diplomatic adviser to the British Foreign Office...the Grey Eminence, the power behind the throne.’ He would be called to the telephone and return ‘ashen-faced’.⁶ Although it had always been a Technicolor project, Berger Powell suggests, wanted to ‘make a stylishly directed, modishly black and white, decorated film’ and Korda, was determined to have ‘a great big colourful extravaganza’.⁷

The conflict on *The Thief of Bagdad* developed because the film grew in the characteristically piece-meal way which is so closely associated with Korda’s failure as an administrator. When he saw it was becoming less ‘commercial’ than his aspiration for it, he tried to redirect Berger towards his changing way of thinking. As

1 Ibid. See also: Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1959, p. 213.

2 Ibid, p. 79.

3 According to Rózsa, Straus receive his full fee; according to Paul Tabori, op. cit., p. 214, Korda was not in a position to pay Berger his and agreed to do so only after the film had recovered its cost. Berger collected a cheque for £2 000, the balance due to him, only in 1948.

4 Rózsa, op. cit., 1982, p. 84.

5 Vansittart is described as ‘a prophet of doom...one of history’s great own worst enemies’ by Charles Cruickshank, *The Fourth Arm*, London, 1977, p.9.

6 Ibid. pp. 80-85. Vansittart had been promoted to be the government’s Chief Diplomatic Adviser, by Chamberlain in 1937 in order to reduce his influence. He was ‘put out to grass’ and had a ‘grandiose title’ but had been removed ‘from the day-to-day running of the foreign policy. It was a great coup for Chamberlain.’, see Richard Cockett, *Twilight of Truth*, London, 1989, p. 47; Cruickshank, op. cit. p. 9.

7 Powell, op. cit., p. 321.

this failed, he undermined him on the set by countermanding his instructions, until finally Berger did leave the film.¹ Korda behaved in the same way to other eminent directors. It was what R. C. Sherriff described rather acidly as stamping 'his own personality on their work.'² In such situations it was others who paid the price. Korda was frequently clumsy and in spite of his reputation for charm, knew how to behave badly. He would impose himself on directors, had intruded on Paul Czinner whilst he was directing the Flora Robson and Diana Napier scenes in *The Rise of Catherine the Great*³ and had similarly interfered on *The Ghost Goes West*, which René Clair was directing.⁴ With Cavalcanti he invited himself onto the stage and then wanted to bring his 'little brother Zoltan' along.⁵ When Cavalcanti protested he was sacked. Korda, wrote Ian Dalrymple 'was a brilliant bringer-out of artistes, but, with one or two exceptions, not of directors: and it has to be said that he would employ men of artistic imagination and individual gifts, in the full appreciation of their worth, only to cloud their originality and break their morale.'⁶

1 Kulik, op. cit., p. 225-232. But Berger was said by *KW*, 17 Aug., 1939, p. 27, to have completed all the interiors and to have left Denham on Wednesday, 16 Aug., 1939. Natalie Kalmus, who was the Technicolor expert on *The Thief*, left at the same time.

2 R. C. Sherriff, *No Leading Lady*, London, 1968, pp. 294-295.

3 Diana Napier Tauber, 27 July 1973, in Kulik, op. cit., p.101. Korda may well have been right to do so. Ivor Montagu wrote an unkind assessment of his work for Gaumont-British, in 1927 or early 1928 in which he described Czinner's sole asset as Bergner, whom he used as an inducement to Pommer at UFA so as he could make another picture. He described *Der Geiger von Florenz* (1926) as 'frankly rubbish dramatically, relying on the personal appeal of the featured star.... From the point of view of direction it is an ambitious blank.'; Ivor Montagu Collection, n.d. Montagu, infatuated as he was with Bergner, is ungenerous to the film which is conventional, whilst containing good performances from all the lead actors, other than Bergner. Technically, Czinner was a weak director and Barry Salt, *Film Style*, London, 1983, p. 32 noticed an orgy of 'eye-line crossing' in *Escape Me Never* (B&D).

4 Kulik, op. cit., p. 137-141. 'He wasn't happy' with Clair's rushes remade 'certain scenes himself,' whilst "'pushing around" parts of Clair's other material.' Clair considered taking his name off the film.

5 Umberto Cavalcanti, in Elizabeth Sussex, *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary*, London, 1975, p. 120. Cavalcanti claims to have been working on *The Lion Has Wings*.

6 Ian Dalrymple, 'Alex', *Journal of the British Film Academy*, Spring, 1956, p. 9. Dalrymple also says, too kindly, that 'he was frequently justified in his interference by the result at the international box-office.' The stories of his interference are legion. *On Elephant Boy*, for example, which Flaherty was to direct, he sent out to India, first Monta Bell, then 'Zoltan' followed, and in the spring of 1936 there was a steady build up of Denham technicians, cameramen and

He could also be manipulative; he tricked Basil Dean, on *Twenty-one Days*;¹ he set up a film with Elsa Lanchester as bait to persuade Charles Laughton to sign a contract.² At the point when the young animator Kathe Houston was working at London films there were queries about the suitability of the costumes for *Things to Come*. 'While I was working for Korda [on the animated cartoon *The Fox Hunt*] he decided to run a competition for *Things to Come*. His mind was already made up, of course, but unfortunately H.G. Wells liked our designs best. Korda said, with his thick Hungarian accent, "They are very beautiful but, my dear, how would we ever find men to fit them," and the work went to John Armstrong and René Hubert, as he wanted in the first place.'³

In spite of suggestions that most of Berger's material was little-used his name heads the list of directors because his is the significant voice on the screen. A detailed consideration of the completed film confirms that by far the greater part of the British studio work is by Berger. The conflict arose because Berger was aiming for a consistency of style which could only be achieved within a single concept, namely of a pre-recorded studio created film, whilst Korda increasingly came to understand how the film might develop commercially. Every intrusion by Korda upset Berger's intended organic unity. Korda, in financial difficulties, leaned towards a more conventional and swashbuckling movie to resolve his financial crisis. The material shot in the Hollywood and the Grand Canyon, where the role of other second unit directors was expanded by Korda, destroyed the coherence for which Berger was

production staff, until at the end there were, according to David Flaherty, three different units shooting madly three different scripts.' Altogether they shot 300 000 feet of film, equivalent to over five and a half hours of screen time. See Arthur Calder-Marshall, *The Innocent Eye*, London 1963, p. 180.

1 Basil Dean, *Mind's Eye*, London, 1973, pps.250-254.

2 Simon Callow, *Charles Laughton*, London 1987, p. 108.

3 Kathe Houston to author, 9 May 1989. *The Fox Hunt* (1936) was directed by Hector Hoppin, an American, and Anthony Gross, an English-Hungarian. Music was by Spoliansky. Houston was the animator.

struggling. It had become a different film, less by the cunning, guile or ruthlessness of Korda than by the range of financial restrictions and the co-incidence of historical events surrounding its making. Kulik makes an interesting observation which, even in the light of new evidence, only needs a minor correction.

It mattered little to Berger if by focussing on the players...he disregarded or sacrificed a grandiose scenic background. Alex, on the other hand, was a film-maker who tended to keep his camera at a distance from his actors in order not to waste the decor surrounding them. Korda wanted *The Thief* to be a spectacle and could not...abide the idea of his enormous and colourful sets taking a back-seat to the actors....Alex was not prepared to give Berger a free hand to direct the picture along pre-planned lines....¹

What is not fully appreciated even now is the influence that Berger's innovative flair had on the young Michael Powell who was not only working on his first major Technicolor feature, but on his first major production. His own work was to be forever influenced by it. A glance at Powell's career after 1940 shows the direct and developing impact, not of *The Robber Symphony* but of *The Thief of Bagdad*. Whenever he could he collaborated with the European artist towards a studio-based film, and eventually to one that was completely pre-scored. His partnership with the Hungarian-born scriptwriter Emeric Pressburger began in 1938 when Korda introduced them to each other at a script conference for *The Spy in Black*.² His designers thereafter, were always European: Vincent Korda, Alfred Junge and later Hein Heckroth. Georges Périnal and Erwin Hillier were his main photographers until after the war. He and Pressburger exploited the opportunities that had been opened to them by Korda, by Technicolor. Above all, *Tempest Within* and *The Thief of Bagdad* were projects which Ludwig Berger had been contracted to direct.

¹ Kulik, op. cit., 1975, p. 225.

² At this point Pressburger was being paid £60 per week by Korda, Rudolph Cartier to author, 31 Oct., 1988.

The Descendants of *The Thief of Bagdad*.

From 1943 onwards, with *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* Powell was himself conscious of the formative influence of Berger.

when we realised that we were going on making big films, I naturally turned to Junge as the right man to head the art department side of it. This was on *Colonel Blimp*. I turned to him as naturally as I turned to Georges Perinal (sic). Nobody had done colour photography like him and nobody has since...human beings lit and photographed by Georges seemed to be different human beings than they were with other people.¹

Blimp was his first colour film 'after all I had no real control over *The Thief of Bagdad*... [Junge] rose with great enthusiasm to the idea and carried it out beautifully, charmingly, and delicately. This collaboration went through to *Black Narcissus* where you have the same idea.'² For the latter Powell turned down the opportunity to go to India as he didn't want two styles in the picture. He didn't 'want to go and shoot some wonderful stuff in India with doubles and then come back and try to match it all in the studio. We're going to have it all under our control here — and do it here.'³ In war conditions, he had not insisted on this restriction and there is location work on *I Know Where I'm Going*, (1945) for example, but he was now feeling the impulse of 'studioism'. In *Black Narcissus* certain sequences were pre-recorded as they had been for Berger. One of the final sequences for example, was

the first time in a film that I planned a sequence with the composer and we did do a complete recording of the sequence before I shot it. I was already feeling my way towards the idea of the ballet of *The Red Shoes* and *The Tales of Hoffman* (sic).... Brian [Easdale] did me a complete pre-score on it. When I shot it I naturally had these notes very much in mind, the actual length of the shots worked out. So possibly the feeling that it was a composed film came over.⁴

1 Interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, op. cit., p. 13-14. Périnal was photographer of *The Thief of Bagdad*.

2 Ibid. p. 14-15.

3 Ibid. See also interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit.

4 Ibid. p. 20.

Powell is justified in claiming to have been working in a tradition which begins with *The Robber Symphony*. Yet as we have seen it is not the sole source and Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, (1937) had shown the way.

The last third of *Black Narcissus* is Powell's tribute to Disney. The choice of colour, the distorted design, and the movement in the sequences after which Sister Ruth (Kathleen Byron) goes mad and runs through the corridors of the convent and into the forest offer a close parallel to Disney's own story and method, although Powell did not story-board and he carried the rhythms and tempos in his head. Celebrations of other directors were to follow, Fritz Lang, Chaplin, and Victor Fleming for example. In his ballet films especially Powell, like Disney and Berger, reduces his performers to animated figures and even a non-specialist of the cinema Paul Marcus, noticed Heckroth's 'Disney-like decors' for *The Red Shoes*.¹

Powell was interested in a kind of cinema which borrowed 'from all the arts and' stirred 'our imagination so much *visually* that we hardly noticed the stories.'² As it had for Berger and Disney, the fairy story offered an opportunity to explore within the confines of cinema themes devoid of political or social implications, which could draw on elements in all the arts and synthesize a set of artistic principles. Not surprisingly he eschewed the architectural sets of the films of Dupont or of Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane*, dismissively observing that the 'danger of films has always been their capacity to accept naturalism.'³ His characters sometimes express views on the nature of art and politics which are not dissimilar to his own. Lermontov (Anton Walbrook) in *The Red Shoes* for example, or Philip Armstrong Scott (Leslie Howard) in *49th Parallel* suggest more Michael Powell the pretentious film-maker and less figures struck from Pressburger's pen⁴. When Armstrong Scott, normally a man of peace, turns on the Nazi who has destroyed the works of the 'degenerate artists' which

1 *PPB*, 26 July 1948.

2 Interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, op. cit., p. 12..

3 Ibid.

4 Lermontov's characterisation is partly based on Korda, but this should not be exaggerated especially as he asserts many of Powell's views.

are in his tent he says 'That's for Thomas Mann, that's for Picasso, that for Matisse, and that's for me.' It could be Powell talking.¹ Wars may come and wars may go he observes, but art goes on for ever. Kracauer's critical observation that Berger's 'never-never land was not beyond the world of politics,'² similarly applies to Powell and Pressburger's work. In spite of their attempts to ignore contemporary events, their films were as much shaped by the fortunes of war as by cinematic progress.

With the stability which Emeric Pressburger provided Powell created some of the major British films of the period. The fact that long after the war he was still developing ideas which originate from his contact with Ludwig Berger confirms his attachment to a process of film-making which was a seemingly-inspired way of controlling sound during the mid-thirties but was in decline at a time when he was in a position to follow it through.³ The film he considers to be his 'most perfect film' *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) is full of tributes to other film-makers, Berger amongst them. It was, he said 'really a tilting match at the documentary boys.... Although for four years people had been making documentaries about war...no one's noticed that there is no one about in the air station. It was a great triumph from my point of view.... They just went for what I thought they would go for, the man and the girl — old hat, but played this way, terribly exciting.'⁴ Yet, again, it was, as Paul Marcus recognised, 'an all Continental effort apparently'.⁵ There is yet another influence on Powell in these years which should not go unnoticed and that is of Laurence Olivier's *Henry V* (Two Cities 1944).

1 Interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell*, op. cit., p. 19. Powell had given Howard his jumper to wear for the scene.

2 Kracauer, op. cit, pp. 107-108.

3 *The Red Shoes*, *The Illusive Pimpernel*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Oh Rosalinda!!* were all 1930s subjects. Even *Hoffmann* had been attempted before. MGM was to have Vicki Baum adapt *Hoffmann* in 1935, see. *The Times*, 20 Sept., 1935, p. 10.

4 Interview in Gough-Yates, *Michael Powell: in Collaboration*, op. cit.. Similarly, for *The Tales of Hoffmann*, 'I was rather hooked on this idea of working out the score, cutting it from a film point of view then producing the whole score as well as you could with the most marvellous voices and making a film from the score — in other words, completely composed before you ever shot a foot.' Ibid.

5 *PPB* 5 Nov., 1946.

Powell claims that in late 1942 or early 1943 he turned down the opportunity to direct *Henry V* and encouraged Olivier to direct it himself.¹ As far as we know he had no other contact with the production yet *Henry V* was to be another influential film in his career and writing in 1946 he associates his own *A Matter of Life and Death* with it.² He argues that his own reflexive tendencies 'didn't cause [the audience] to lose the thread of the story but rather increased their enjoyment of it.'³ It

indicates an exciting door to the new fields of story presentation where artists and audience together share the knowledge of illusion. So long as impressionistic, illusionistic atmosphere can be maintained, actors and scenes can be sheer enchantment, real to a story.... *Henry V* is a more entire example of what can be and will be done with the whole impressionistic, illusionistic mood. It was so well done that few noticed and no one missed 'real' castles, halls, walls and ships. Now much more effective were those stylised backdrops to the blending of the story than would have been any attempt at naturalism....⁴

Powell writes that the art director play the dominant role in a cinema in which sound, also, 'must be planned in its full relation to colour and continuity. For have we had real use of sound as yet? Dialogue use and background music yes, but no full assimilation into the web of the entirety.'⁵

Korda, Powell, Pressburger and *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

After a number of trial runs, Powell was about to launch himself into his pre-scored films but once more he was not alone. It worth noting that at this very time in 1946 Berger had created a company in New York, the Opera Film Company, for exactly the same purpose. Paul Marcus noted that he was preparing *Don Giovanni* with the

1 Powell, op. cit., p. 602.

2 Michael Powell, 'The Shape of Things to Come', *British Film Yearbook 1947-48*.

3 Ibid. p. 104.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., p. 105. Paul Sheriff, né Shouvalov, was previously assistant to both Lazare Meerson and André Andrejew, made use of false perspective 'in accordance with the principles of the paintings of the French primitives....', see Léon Barsacq, op. cit., p. 131.

singer Alexander Kipnis.¹ A little later and approximately ten years after the Günther Stapenhorst-Ludwig Berger project of *Tempest Within* for Korda, Marcus recorded without irony that Stapenhorst, who was in Germany rebuilding his career,² was trying to interest Bergner in 'an opera picture'.³

Powell visited Munich with Pressburger in 1950, interested in making *The Tales of Hoffmann* there. It was a natural inclination for someone attached to German cinema, but 'British technicians protested at the English team wanting to make *Hoffmann* in Geiselsberg and Korda agreed to make it in London.'⁴ Once more it was Korda who for commercial reasons pulled the strings at the last moment. He insisted that Powell cut 'the scene right at the end with Pamela Brown as the Muse...a beautiful and moving scene...one of the most moving things that Mickey had ever directed... this woman standing there painted gold.' Korda in a bitter exchange argued that no one would understand it.⁵ The reviews were mostly unfavourable and, although it is a major film in the Powell-Pressburger canon and a triumph for all the technicians and artists associated with it, it did badly at the box office.

The Tales of Hoffmann is the high water mark of the German influence in British films but it was fifteen years too late, and apart from its commercial failure, it appeared arch and pretentious alongside other Korda films of the period *The Third Man* and *State Secret* for example. Pressburger and Powell were not to work for Korda again. The formal experimentation of the 1930s had been temporarily frozen by

1 *PPB*, 2 Dec., 1946. This was, presumably Henri Leiser, the French born film producer. The film was not made. Berger also established a company in London in 1946, but this too produced no films. Berger's only post war film was *Ballerina*, made in France, four years later.

2 *PPB*, 16 Dec. 1946, noted: 'Erich Pommer granted the first licences for the USA zone in Germany; Günther Stapenhorst, Curt Ortel, Fritz Thiery, Josef von Baky, Helmuth Kaeutner, Harald Braun, Jacob Geis, Georg Fiebiger, and Gabrielle Schmalzigaug are allowed to produce picture(s) in Geiselsberg and Tempelhof.' Stapenhorst's permission was given on 11 December, 1946. He was cleared 'positively' by the Office of the Military Government of Bavaria and 'given a rating of the highest possible quality.' Document made available by Margarita Stapenhorst.

3 *PPB*, 27 Sept., 1948.

4 *PPB*, 19 June, 1950.

5 Norcen Best, interview with Rex Stapleton, in 'A Matter of Powell and Pressburger', MA Thesis, London, 1984.

the war only to be warmed up in a changed world. There had been changes in British cinema of the 1940s not simply as part of the development of the documentary idea but as part of a change that was taking place in cinema throughout the western world. When in 1943 the French film director Jean-Pierre Melville arrived in London, he saw twenty-seven films within the space of a week's leave and noticed a definite redirection in the cinema towards a greater realism. The war had turned everything upside down; in May 1939 a 'certain form of civilisation [had] suddenly disappeared along with a certain form of cinema.' Melville quickly realised that the cinema had changed... The tempo, the pace, of the pre-war comedies had disappeared' Welles, Kazan, Wilder, Wise, Preminger, Mankiewicz, 'people who really came out of American cinema', could be 'felt in the air.'¹ British cinema was not detached from the changes but as we have seen, Powell and Pressburger consciously disassociated themselves from them. Thereafter British cinema gives way to a cinema of class and social concern with films like *Mandy* (1952), *The Cruel Sea* and *Genevieve* (both 1953), and various adaptations of classic plays and novels, a continuation in fact of the tradition of British Film-making which had been encouraged by Cavalcanti.

Powell and *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

Although the cinema was changing Powell and Pressburger remained devoted to a notion of cinema which they had ingested in the 1930s, much of it heavily influenced by European film-makers in Britain. When the partnership of Powell and Pressburger ended so, effectively, did this branch of European-influenced cinema. *The Tales of Hoffmann* remains a remarkable and fascinating experiment, but it is a film which is rarely admired.

Thomas Elsaesser writes of it as 'seriously flawed, over-ambitious and uneven.

It creates a confusing complexity, in which images of startling force are side by side with a rather too obtrusive, mechanical symbolism. But it is a film which is genuinely disturbing, not least by its uncompromising pessimism. Its importance

¹ *Melville on Melville*, ed. Rui Nogueira, London, 1971, p. 16.

derives from its partial failure: made in 1951, it foreshadows the decline of the great American cinema, and very accurately feels its way towards the modern 'continental' cinema, haunted as the latter is by an often paralyzing self-consciousness about the limits of the cinematic medium.¹

Elsaesser considers that Powell's 'formal problems' which he sees as anticipating those which Jean-Luc Godard was to pose about the nature of cinema in *Le Mépris*, 'stem directly from his themes, which seem to belong more to the 60s',² but Elsaesser is starting his journey from the destination. Godard was later concerned with the use of sound, but in a different way. Powell emphasised illusion in contrast to the 'heavy naturalism' which he saw as characterizing the work of Orson Welles. In using Hein Heckroth as its designer, he and Pressburger were refining a tradition in which sets, sound and colour 'become a backdrop to the story and actors; not an entangled aurora of supposed-reality.'³ Amongst the many stage productions which Pressburger would have seen in Berlin would have been Ernst Legal's famous 1929 version of *Hoffmann* which Moholy-Nagy had designed⁴ and Reinhardt's production of *Die Fledermaus*. Heckroth's work of the time included Berg's *Wozzeck*, Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*, and significantly, a production of *Hoffmann*. Powell was searching for a musical form which was reverential towards the silent film and in which the images were accompanied solely by music.

A scene in *Perfect Understanding* (Cyril Gardner 1932) which Powell wrote and as second unit director could well have directed, has a 16mm. camera filming a holiday sequence which moves directly to the projector, a device he also uses in

1 Thomas Elsaesser, 'The Tales of Hoffmann,' in Ian Christie, ed., *Powell Pressburger and Others*, London, 1978, pp. 62-65.f

2 Ibid.

3 Michael Powell, 'The Shape of Films to Come,' op. cit., p. 104.

4 Schiffer Spoliansky's *Fs Liegt in der Luft*, Brecht/Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper*, Carl Zuckmayer's *Katharina Knie*, Max Brand's *Maschinist Hopkins*, a Reinhardt production of Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, in a revised version by Marcellus Schiffer, Rössler, and Erich Korngold, Brecht Hindemith's *Lehrstück*, Kaiser Spoliansky's *Zwei Krawatten*, Oscar Straus's *Marietta*, Brecht Weill's *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, and Bruno Frank's *Sturm in Wasserglas* are all from this period.

Peeping Tom twenty-seven years later.¹ Powell's importance to historians of the cinema and the often unexpressed reason for their admiration, is that he was the first director to see his autobiography and the history of cinema as synonymous. His films are littered with personal references of one kind or another and frequently have echoes from earlier films which have influenced his thinking;² actors are given his or his wife's clothes to wear; his casting, certainly of Esmond Knight, who was blinded at the beginning of the war, but especially of women, has a special significance.³

Elsaesser by adopting an auteurist position and attributing *The Tales of Hoffmann* to Powell alone and not to a team which includes Pressburger, its photographer Christopher Challis⁴ and its designer Hein Heckroth misses the crucial point that Powell as a film-maker exists *only* where a combination of talents meet. Challis believe that the writing of the scripts was a joint effort 'all the way along the line...they always worked closely together and they did it together.'⁵ He accepted that Heckroth was very much the visual auteur. The 'whole concept of the film started off with Beecham sitting at the piano and singing the whole opera to us.... Having done that I think Hein virtually started off with a totally free hand with his ideas for each of the sequences. The colour key idea ie yellow for the doll and so on etc. so you could say that the concept initially was Hein's...there was no script in the usual sense...no dialogue...just an illustration of the libretto.'⁶ Powell however was visible in the film through 'a very sympathetic interpretation of lots of Hein's ideas coupled with the

1 Brian Easdale, the composer of *Black Narcissus* and *The Ballet of Red Shoes*, plays the piano behind the *Peeping Tom* sequences.

2 Lang's *Metropolis* and *Der Mude Tod* [also known as *Between Worlds*], Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz*, and Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* are among those films which are self consciously recalled in his post-war films.

3 Hence the sequence at the end of *The Tales of Hoffmann* in which Pamela Brown appeared and Korda insisted on removing was a major blow to Powell. The characters played by Knight could either see in their 'mind's eye', eg. *Black Narcissus*, or needed sight, eg. *The Red Shoes* and *Peeping Tom*.

4 Challis's had even worked on *The Thief of Bagdad*, as camera assistant.

5 Christopher Challis, Interview with Rex Stapleton, in 'A Matter of Powell and Pressburger', op. cit.

6 Ibid. All 'the use of curtain swags, gauzes, and masks [were] all Hein.'

technical knowledge and skill of knowing how to bring it all into reality.’¹ Powell himself placed the director third in importance, behind the author and production designer but above the cinematographer in the creation of the cinema he advocated.²

Powell’s expressed attitude to the world was peculiarly the attitude of the film-maker. As Ludwig Berger had, he felt the world to be non-filmic and therefore, not a subject for film-making. When he shot on location, as in the beach sequence close to the opening of *A Matter of Life and Death* or in parts of *A Canterbury Tale*, the films take on the quality of a studio authenticity. A modernist, a formalist, and a visualiser, it was his good fortune to find an imaginative partner in Emeric Pressburger who was to some degree able to contain his formal, even wayward, interests and introduce a component of human characterisation. Anyone puzzled as to how Pressburger who was essentially a writer could be said to have influenced an operetta such as *The Tales of Hoffmann* might consider among other things its structural similarities to *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*. Hoffmann’s *idée fixe*: Olympia-Giulietta-Antonia have an earlier manifestation in the doll-like triple-role of Edith-Barbara-Angela. Their films always remained semi-detached from the realism of the cinema and approached an ideal film which is about art and is artfully presented. Powell asserted a certain conservative, even reactionary aloofness in his work which always looked backwards towards an age which had helped form his imagination; the narrative skills of Kipling, the imagism of German cinema, the cinematic inheritance of major directors and his autobiography all combine in a unique cannon of work. Pressburger is right to note that neither worked well without the other. At the height of the war the films of Powell and Pressburger *Contraband*, *49th Parallel*, *One of Aircraft is Missing*, *Blimp*, *A Canterbury Tale*, and *I Know Where I’m Going* are only obliquely related to it. After 1945 they are not related to it at all. In the search for formal perfection they avoided politics and their films address none of the social issues of the time. The personal component of the films lodged in ‘the story-teller’ where Powell was concerned or

1 Ibid.

2 Michael Powell, *The Shape of Films to Come*, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

with a 'foreign' or otherwise displace protagonist in Pressburger's case are more distinctive characteristics than any sense of British character. Sometimes Powell welds into one of the central characters some of the qualities of an artist and Pressburger introduces features of the émigré; together they produced some of the most personal but inaccessible films of British cinema. Their final film for Korda *The Tales of Hoffmann* completes the project which Berger set out to achieve on the *Tempest Within* in May 1937.

Conclusions

In the period under consideration three factors reduced the dominance of German cinema. First, as John Grierson argued, 'Hollywood by suddenly buying up Murnau and Freund and Pommer and Lubitsch broke the back of the German School'.¹ These talents were 'joined by a whole crowd, including the star directors E. A Dupont, Ludwig Berger, Lupu Pick, Paul Leni...and such actors as Veidt and Jannings...'² Second, the introduction of sound in 1928 -29 transformed the export market for German films and introduced a new range of international artists. The third factor was the rise to power of the Nazis.

In 1933 *The Kinematograph Yearbook* observed that German studios had produced 120 feature films.³ There was a fall of approximately 25 % from 1932, to a figure of 94 films in 1935. *Kine* noted a general decrease in the German film trade for a whole period 1930 -1936 and commented that the 'drop in German production was primarily attributed to difficulties experienced in putting into execution the programmes projected...owing to shortage of suitable artists.' It argued that 'the political and cultural principles of National Socialism implied by such measures as the removal of Jewish producers, authors, directors and actors...[have]...militated against the preservation of an atmosphere in which a new and delicate industry can thrive.'⁴ In a strongly worded article, the writer and producer Ivor Montagu observed that the 'colossal decline' of the German film industry in the years 1932 to 1934 partly paralleled the plight of its foreign trade in general but, with more than a little sarcasm, he also drew attention to the legislation which prevented Jews and politically

1 John Grierson, *New Britain*, 1933, in *Grierson on the Movies*, ed. Forsyth Hardy, London, 1981, p. 137.

2 Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, Princeton, 1947, p. 135.

3 *The Kinematograph Yearbook*, 1935, p. 21.

4 *KW*, 13 Aug. 1936.

unacceptable figures from finding employment. Montagu lists approximately 80 well known artists who were unable to work in Germany and there were many more; although some of these made their way to Hollywood, many came to Britain and remained and worked here throughout the war.¹

They came as fully experienced filmmakers to a country which was itself uncertain of its place in the world, with a film business which was little more than a group of cottage industries and which lacked talented producers, directors, writers and technicians. The film industry paralleled the rest of industry in looking for a successful internal market inside the Empire but as Branson and Heinemann argue that this apparent source of strength 'was also a source of weakness. The tendency of British investors to export capital to the colonies, rather than invest it in modernizing production at home...contributed to the technical backwardness of the older basic industries in Britain.'² The film industry reflected the low capital investment, poor production facilities, and inadequate technical training which was to be found elsewhere; it looked for an international market for its films but wanted it to come easily. The European émigré raised the level of debate in Britain, brought it high technical standards and throughout the period trained many of the next generation of British filmmakers. Linda Wood makes it clear that the competence which was claimed for British technicians was some years away and that 'For many filmmakers, the Thirties provided the apprenticeship which made possible the flowering of British production in the Forties.'³

The campaign for Empire Free Trade had deep cultural implications and whereas the film movement in Britain could have been seen as bicephalous, Grierson posited British documentary in opposition to the feature film, 'an essentially British development' which drew on 'the national talent for understatement.' and to which the

1 Ivor Montagu, 'The Decline of the German Film Trade', in John Paddy Carstairs, ed., *Movie Merry Go Round*, London, 1937, pp.196-205.

2 Norcen Branson and Margot Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties*, London, 1971, p. 13.

3 Linda Wood, ed., *British Films 1927-1939*, p.6. She believes that 1939 is the turning point, but it would be more realistic to look to a date after WW2..

foreign film maker would, by definition, not be able to contribute. In all studies of British cinema the British documentary film has been seen as an important, even determining, factor in the development of the British feature film. George Perry for example traces within a few pages¹, a line from John Grierson's film *Drifters* (EMB 1929) to *The Foreman Went to France*² and *One of Our Aircraft is Missing*³ and we find Andrew Higson, still more recently, continuing to examine the relationship between the 'documentary idea' and British feature films of the 1960s, the films of Tony Richardson and Karel Reisz.⁴ We can now see that the premiss for Grierson's sometimes fierce hostility to aliens and their work lies in an ideological commitment to Empire no less strong than the cultural elitism which the BBC practiced. There were no émigrés on the pay-roll of the GPO Film Unit in Grierson's time and even under Cavalcanti's leadership the composers Darius Milhaud, Maurice Jaubert and Ernst Hermann Meyer passed through leaving no mark. Meyer, the only one of the three to remain in Britain throughout the war was, with Cavalcanti, driven out in the campaign against aliens in 1940.⁵

The protectionism for which ACT argued and which Grierson publicly supported was a function of the world wide economic crisis of the 1930s and ACT offered an

1 George Perry, *The Great British Picture Show*, London, 1974, pp. 95-103.

2 Ealing 1942, dir. Charles Friend.

3 Anglo-Amalgamated 1942, dir. Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger.

4 Andrew Higson, 'Britain's Outstanding Contribution to the Film', *All Our Yesterdays*, ed. Charles Barr, London, 1986. He sees significant variations and developments, not least from 'a common public sphere of social personal experience...to the privatised look of the narrative protagonist.' p. 93.

5 Meyer had been a student of Hanns Eisler and Hindemith and a friend of Brecht's and in 1936 Brecht and Eisler introduced him to Cavalcanti in London in 1936. He was an innovator in film composition, was a so called 'secret member' of the Communist Party and used the pseudonym Peter Baker for much of his conducting and composing. *The Refugees* (1940), which had words by John Heartfield, is an example. He used it too when lecturing and conducting the choirs of the Workers' Music Association and Morley College. Apart from his contribution to *North Sea* (GPO, 1938, dir. Harry Watt), his name is little known. 'His name changes were intended to help him keep a low profile so that he did not appear over active politically,' and 'Ernst used the name Peter Baker only for his political work in the London Labour Choral Union, and in the Workers' Music Association and the WEA....' Klaus F. Meyer, interview with author, 10 Dec., 1989; letter from Majorie Mayer to author, 13 Aug. 1990, respectively.

analysis of the film industry which attempted to restrict the debate to the classic relationship between management and labour. The cheapskate conditions under which many technicians were obliged to work disposed it to shortsightedness and the long periods of unemployment which many of its members experienced and the poor training which the industry offered encouraged ACT to be hypocritical even towards those members of the union who happened to be foreigners. In its meetings with the MoL its arguments were palpably weak and civil servants who took advice from a number of sources, found it easy to deflect its arguments. During the war ACT played an important role in the organization of labour which offered it the illusion of power and control over entry into the industry and, seemingly, the opportunity to raise the standard of working conditions for its members. Inevitably, it was only in the technical fields that it was able to exert any continuing influence. Producers, directors and others, whom ACT attempted to embrace soon fell away after the war as their own interests conflicted with those of the union. Subsequently it sought to create a supply of scarce labour by restricting its membership.

A profitable alternative to the 'international' film turned out to be illusory and all other adventures failed. Films for the British domestic market, which were usually made with British technicians were frequently cheap but not cheerful. The films associated with Basil Dean were cheerful but not cheap. The only films with any chance of success in the world's most important market, the United States, were those with American distribution money involved in their production. Korda, in part, achieved this but with the exception of the occasional film from other sources, he was the only one to do so. There were many reasons and frequently the films were not up to the standard required in the American market but just as important the supply and demand of domestic films to the American market affected the opportunities for the successful distribution of those from Britain. The success of Korda's *The Private Life of Henry VIII* triggered the flow of funds from insurance companies, finance houses and banks who were looking for easy money. The trumpeted cost of *Henry*, £60 000, was considerably lower than its actual cost and films subsequently budgeted for the

same sum seemed to run away with money. Once the books were opened it became easy to blame the management of LFP, Capitol, Twickenham and a host of other companies and certainly there was waste and extravagance to accompany the often poor judgement but, at bottom, the financial institutions were the cause of the problem and attempted to blame each other for a lack of financial control.

For all his weaknesses, Korda was a visionary who not only nurtured talent and Technicolor but grasped the essential requirements of the American market and came close to establishing a major studio in an economically unfavourable climate. LFP, despite all criticism was relatively well run whilst the production companies of others, those of Schach, Hagen, Dean and Wilcox for example, had none of its virtues but most of its vices. Whatever the failures of management the companies were locked into a framework of financial speculation which was structured in such a way that if one collapsed the others could not survive. The mismanagement which is attributed to them is part of the greater failure of financial institutions which visualized LFP as not only a production company in its own right but as a studio which rented its stages, equipment and artists to others who did not have their own facilities. As all were mutually interdependent, when one failed they all fell.

British films avoided the wider political issues of the 1930s but were nevertheless involved in them. *Loyalties* and *Jew Süss*, although important films, were less directly associated with the experience of the refugee and exile than were *Broken Blossoms*, *Storm in A Teacup* and *Hatter's Castle*, which identify closely with the émigré and his concerns. Their design and photography combine with their scripts to carry the themes through a form of 'studioism', about which Paul Rotha wrote perceptively as early as 1929

The German cinema has been a great cinema. It has produced principles and processes that have been all-important contributions to the cinema of the world. From its individual development there have come the freedom of the camera, the feeling of completeness, and the importance of architectural environment as part of realisation. These have been brought about by the national aptitude for

craftsmanship, for structure, for studioism. They have been a means to an end that in itself has not yet been discovered...¹

Writing nearly 30 years later Paul Rotha recalled that 'The years from 1932 to 1939 in the British cinema were mainly distinguished by the fact that few films produced then were in any way characteristically British except that they were made on British soil.... It was a fixed belief of the time that for a British film to be successful in the international field, it must be made by a cosmopolitan team of film-makers...' ² So as this observation is, Rotha was an exceptional colleague and friend to many émigrés and was identifying one of the main weaknesses of British films of the 1930s, they lacked both a political programme and a social perspective. For all the combination of talents many of the films were insubstantial, made by artists who had been made politically impotent through exile from Germany and censorship in Britain. Most of the films which touch on émigré concerns are triflingly routine, but a recent study of many of them reveal them as having more interest than has previously been appreciated; some of them have been undervalued or dismissed without adequate reason, often on the chauvinistic ground that they were made by foreigners, sometimes because they offered a false image of Britain.

The development of realism in British cinema after 1940 has often been attributed to the influence of British documentary but, as we have seen, it is by no means clear cut and was part of a world wide phenomenon. Certainly the ideological argument as to the direction which British cinema should take was still in the air towards the end of the war and the Ealing film *Dead of Night*, particularly in view of Cavalcanti's expressed attitude towards German expressionist cinema, can be taken as a filmic response to the direction in which Powell and Pressburger were trying to direct British cinema. Writing shortly after 1945, Dilys Powell whilst admiring *Dead of Night*, argued that, with the exception of *Henry V*, a film which follows firmly in the path so

¹Paul Rotha, *The Film Till Now*, London, 1930, p. 208.

² Paul Rotha, *Rotha on Film*, London, 1958, p. 255.

admired by Michael Powell in its stylization and its avoidance of the natural colours, English cinema 'produced no films of the first magnitude during the war.'¹

The partnership which Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger enjoyed throughout the 1940s and 1950s offers an example of the ways in which the British cinema absorbed European influences. Their films show the émigré as an outsider in Britain: *The Spy in Black*, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, *A Canterbury Tale* and *I Know Where I'm Going* for example, illustrate the way in which a theme associated with the collision of cultures developed in their work. Pressburger's career demonstrates the conflicting calls upon his loyalties. His increasingly sophisticated handling of the theme of exile fades with the war but the dominant preoccupation of his scripts after it demonstrates that it was far from dead and *Die Fledermaus* (*Oh Rosalinda!!*) and *The Tales of Hoffmann* are constant reminders that his work remained outside the prescribed path for British film. His novel, *The Glass Pearls*, published in 1966, in which a concentration camp doctor wanted for war crimes hides in England, suggests that he was still concerned with the theme, inverting it and considering its consequences.

If Pressburger's contribution is essentially through the subject material and the script, a similar development can be seen in the way in which Powell visualized it. In the mid-1930s Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* had revealed a possible direction for cinema in which sound, picture and design were integrated into a unified whole. Friedrich Feher and Ludwig Berger had been experimenting with live action along similar lines and with *The Thief of Bagdad* Berger revealed fresh possibilities. To some extent the influence lay dormant during the war but after it Powell increasingly associated his interpretive skill with Hein Heckroth, a designer whose stage career had started in Essen, and moved in the direction of using his actors as puppets. If sequences in *Black Narcissus* are reminiscent of Disney, the whole of *Hoffmann* goes further with Powell reducing his characters to automatons and

1 One of 'The Arts in Britain' series included in *Since 1939*, ed. Arnold L. Haskell, London, 1948.

combining sound, design and colour into a live-action approximation to animation.¹ *Hoffmann* completes a programme which was devised in the early 1930s and alongside other films produced in 1951, *White Corridors*, *The Man in the White Suit*, *Where No Vultures Fly* and *The Lady With the Lamp*, for example, it illustrates a continuation of the ideological conflicts which had dogged British cinema throughout the previous two decades.

There were contradictions, of course: Grierson appointed the ex-editor of *Film Kurier* Hans Feld to the editorship of *World Film News*; he recommended to the MoL foreign technicians whom ACT opposed. Many a technician owe their future careers to the training which they received from a disparaged émigré colleague. Those who worked at the BBC sometimes found a sympathetic ear, émigrés who were experiencing financial difficulties were often given a helping hand. Yet the BBC also institutionalized the ideological conflicts and Matyas Seiber could both have a work performed and simultaneously rejected by the listening panel. Many found work hard to come by, young émigrés Herbert Lom, Martin Esslin and Julius Gellner amongst them were to thrive within the Corporation.

The question remains as to whether the émigré film makers were an important influence in the development of British cinema? With regard to acting the answer is not at all and, as Hugh Rorrison puts it, 'Foreign actors made their careers by fitting in'.² In other respects feature film production was transformed by their presence, although the impact was frequently indirect. It is not easy to recognise the influence which the cine-photographer Curt Courant had on his assistant Erwin Hillier, still less is it possible to know what was learnt by the script and scenario writers who came in contact with Carl Mayer. The British approach to training, outside of Technicolor³,

¹ John Ellis, 'Watching Death at Work', *Powell Pressburger and Others*, ed. Ian Christie, London, 1978,

p. 97, observes this tendency in the earlier, *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946).

² Hugh Rorrison, 'German Theatre and Cabaret in London, 1939-45', in *Theatre and Film in Exile*, ed. Gunter Berghaus, Oxford, 1989, pp. 47-48.

³ Apart from Korda's interest, Technicolor, was not British.

was close to the long tradition of amateurism which is so much a part of ingrained British values. Hillier makes the point that in spite of all the jealous resentment that existed, sometime from surprising sources, training in Britain would not have existed at all had it not been for the émigré in the 1930s.¹ The difficulty for the British artist and technician lay in historical practice within the so-called empirical tradition and needs to be compared with the highly theoretical approach of the European. Writers Hans Wilhelm, Emeric Pressburger and Carl Mayer, for example, had analysed and studied film form, the émigré cine-photographers, Günther Krampf, Mutz Greenbaum, Otto Kanturek and others were more than technicians, they were accomplished craftsmen who contributed to the theme of the film.

The climate for professional training was often absent in British studios and as late as 1939 the Czechoslovakian cine-photographer Otto Kanturek could make an unfavourable comparison between the 'easy expert organisation of the camera departments,' which he found in Hollywood with standardized equipment throughout the industry with that which is to be found in Britain.² Above all he emphasized the 'expert organisation of the camera department...the same cameras, mainly Mitchells, the same dolly trucks, and nearly always the same lenses.' It was genuine production line filmmaking. In Britain the lack of security and the sense of going it alone led to small under-financed production companies where price was often the deciding factor in selecting the equipment to be used. It limited the possibilities for the director as well as the technician and writer and determined the style which is associated with British cinema.

1 Even Kulík, *Alexander Korda*, London, 1975, pp.74-75, misunderstands the situation. She seems to believe that the reason 'almost every "foreign" member of staff had a least one English counterpart,' was so as to provide the foreigner with a work permit. Muir Mathieson, who was 21 at the time, gives it as the reason why he only became assistant music director to Kurt Schroeder. This is incorrect. Korda certainly wanted the 'ace' technician, Périnal, Harold Young, et. al., and it was a condition of employment that training took place, but it was not a condition that applied to British technicians. As the MoL knew, companies would abandon films rather than risk an inexperienced technician.

2 *CT*, Jan.-Feb., 1939.

Taking everything into account émigrés in the film industry were appreciated and received with surprisingly little hostility. Although we have cited minor examples of anti-Semitism Arthur Koestler, for example, whilst chiding the British and their institutions for their narrowness, experienced none at all.¹ There was poor judgement, considerable foolishness and parochialism, but there was little prejudice and when it appeared it was quickly sat upon. Neither the BBC nor the MoL allowed it any space and ACT, for all its resentment, seems to have paid little attention to it, perhaps recognizing that the experienced technicians were indeed providing a quality of training which the industry would otherwise not offer. The debate which survived and continued to be argued until television finally killed off the film industry in Britain was primarily ideological and concerned with the way that a country in economic decline and which had lost an Empire could find a distinct and identifiable place for itself in the world.

¹ Arthur Koestler in Kay Gladstone interviews, *British Service Cameramen*, 1939-45, Accession no. 005393, IWM. He was 'requisitioned' by the MoI for whom he wrote *Lift Your Head Comrade* (1943, pr. Basil Wright, dir. Michael Hankinson). Koestler had seen a great deal of anti-Semitism in France.

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Appendix

Skeleton Biographical Details of Selected Film-Émigrés to Britain 1933-45

Not included are many foreign born film émigrés who entered the film industry only after the war, Walter Lassally, Ken Adam, Martin Miller, Peter Adam and Wolf Rilla, for example.

Kurt (Curt) C. Alexander: Writer, producer. B. 1910, Russia. D. 1941. First film in UK, *Sons of the Sea* (British Consolidated 1939 dir. Maurice Elvey). Launched Standard International Pictures Ltd.

Josef Almas (Josef Durham Josef Damen) Actor. B. Smyrna, Turkey. B. 1897. D. 1948, Berlin. Acted in many German films, including *Metropolis*, *M*, and *Die Mörder Dimitri Karamasoff*. Entered British films 1944 in *Mr. Emmanuel* (Two Cities 1944, dir. Harold French). Character actor who also used pseudonyms. Returned to Germany after the war, initially to Zurich, but found it difficult to re-establish himself.

Josef Ambor: Lighting Cameraman. B. Austria, 1908. Entered films in Vienna in 1935, working for Scendphon-Film. In Britain he worked on the documentaries, including *Look-Mum Soldiers* (dir. Ralph Bond).

Gitta Alpar: Opera singer. B. 5 March 1903, Hungary. Married the actor Gustav Frohlich, who divorced her in 1935 as her Jewish origins endangered his career. From 1927-33, she was Berlin's 'leading diva'. To France in 1933 and was appearing in Hungary in 1936, when C. B. Cochran brought her to England to appear in *Home and Beauty*. Appeared in three British films before going to USA, the first of which was *I Give My Heart* (BIP 1935, dir. Marcel Varnel).

Charlotte Ander: Actress. B. Germany. Started in operetta at the age of 16. and appeared for four months in each year in stage productions for the Viennese producer, Yarno, and for UFA the rest. First significant part in *Danton* (1921 dir. Dimitri Buchowetzki), opposite Emil Jannings. In Britain, appeared in *Maid Happy* (Bandar Films 1933, dir. Mansfield Markham) and *My Song Goes Round the World* (BIP 1934, dir. Richard Oswald).

Cyril Arapoff (Kyril Arapov): Cine-photographer. B. Warsaw, 1898. D. London, 1976. Came to UK in 1919, after Russian Revolution. Worked as a tutor in Paris and Germany and studied still portraiture in the studio of Annelise Kretschmer in Dortmund. 1933 opened a photographic studio in Oxford and became the official photographer to the Markova/Dolin Ballet Company, 1935 and 1937. Became still photographer to the Strand Film Company and in 1941, assistant camera-man. 1942 joined the Crown Film Unit as photographer. 1952-55, with Cavalcanti in Brazil and returned to UK in 1961 to work on National Coal Board.

Documentaries include: *Cotwold Club* (Strand 1944 dir. Charles de Latour).

Andrei Andrejew (André Andreyev/ Andre Andreiv): Art director. B. 21 Jan. 1897, St. Petersburg, Russia. D. 1966. Education at the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. Worked in the research department of the Moscow Arts Theatre before WW1 and later as art director in Tiflis and Berlin, where he worked for the Deutsches Theater, later for the Burgtheater, and in Vienna and the National Theatre in Prague. Entered films in 1922, on *Raskolnikov*, followed by *Thérèse Raquin*. He became the art director for DESU, Berlin and one of Germany's most famous art directors. Last film in Germany was Pabst's *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1931). Then to Paris in 1932 and to England in 1935 as art director for Toeplitz on *The Dictator* (Toeplitz Prods.1935, dir. Alfred Santell and Victor Saville) and for LFP. He designed with perspective in mind and was unusual in that he cared little for drawing. In Paris during the war, but afterwards again worked in Britain.

Joseph Bato: Designer. B. 15. Oct. 1888, Hungary. Studied architecture, and painting under Matisse in Paris. Entered films in 1930 with a documentary on mural painting. Worked as stage and screen designer in Europe. To England in late thirties and worked on costumes and as asst. art director. First UK film, *The Thief of Bagdad* (LFP 1940 dir. Powell Whelan Berger) followed by *Major Barbara* (Pascal Productions 1939 dir. Anthony Asquith and Pascal). Published *Defiant City* in 1942, a series of sketches on the London blitz. When Korda went to USA he worked at MGM British Studios Ltd., and later worked on some of the Archers films. Rejoined Korda after the war as Associate Art Director on *An Ideal Husband* (1947) and *Bonnie Prince Charlie* (1948) among others.

Rudolph Becker: Director of foreign business at UFA, he became general manager of Associated Film Industries in 1929, the policy of which was pan-European production and distribution. Managing dir. of the associated company, ASFI, had a financial interest in BSFP and made two films in the UK, *City of Song* (1931 dir. Carmine Gallone) and the unsuccessful *The Bells* (1931 dir. Oscar Werndorff). He resigned and returned to Europe, retaining business interests in Britain.

Ludwig Berger (Ludwig G.H. Bamberger): Director, writer, scriptwriter. B. 6 Jan. 1892 Mainz. D. 18 May 1969 Schlangenbad Germany. Education at Universities of Munich and Heidelberg, studying music, musicology and history of art. By 1916 he had begun directing and producing opera, ballet and drama at Theater Mainz, Stadttheater Hamburg, and later at Volksbühne am Bulowplatz, Berlin under Frederick Kayssler. He directed Shakespeare for Max Reinhardt, collaborating with his brother, the set designer Rolf Bamberger at the Deutsches Theater and Kammerspiele, Berlin. From 1920 he worked at the Prussian State Theatres, under Leopold Jessner, and other theatres. Entered cinema for Pommer in 1920 with *Der Richter von Zalamea* (Decla-Bioscop). To Hollywood in 1927 where he directed four films, working with people like Pola Negri, Emil Jannings, and Maurice Chevalier. During the period 1933-39, he spent much of the time in Switzerland,

Holland, and England. Known in England only for his work on *The Thief of Bagdad* (LFP 1940). In the cinema, he attempted to combine musical and sound and picture into an organic whole. During the war, he was in semi-hiding in Holland. After the war he made only one film, *Ballerina* (1950), in France, although he wrote some scripts and produced the occasional play. He returned to Germany.

Elisabeth Bergner (Elisabeth Ettel): Actress B. Drohobycz (Mähren), Poland 22 Aug. 1897. D. 12 May 1986, London. Married: Paul Czinner 1933. Naturalized British citizen 1938. Trained Vienna Konservatorium. First appeared on the stage at the Municipal Theatre Innsbruck, 1916-17 and at the City Theatre Zürich, 1919, directed by Dr. Alfred Reucker. A triumphant career included Shaw's *St. Joan*, *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* and *The Constant Nymph* under Barnowsky. After playing Portia in 1928 at the Staatstheater, she toured Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, and Germany before returning to Berlin and acting again with Reinhardt.

Early films include: *Nju*, *Der Evangelimann* (1923) and *Der Geiger von Florenz* (Decla 1926 dir. Paul Czinner). Paris in 1931 and England in June 1932, brought over by Korda, with Czinner and Carl Mayer. Successful stage debut in *Escape Me Never*, London 1933 but James M. Barne's *The Boy David* failed.

First UK film *Catherine the Great* (LFP 1934). Left for USA in 1940 during filming in Canada of *49th Parallel* (Ortus/Mol 1941) in 1940, returning after the war. During the war she appeared in *Paris Calling* (Universal 1941) and, in 1943, played at the Booth Theatre in New York in *The Two Mrs. Carrolls*. In 1952 she was invited back to Germany by Alexander Franke who had founded a touring theatre group, Der Grune Wagen, and appeared in *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Long Days Journey Into Night* and others plays, acting on the Swiss, German and Austrian stage as well as three German films, after 1962.

Rudolph Bernaur (Rudolph Bernauer): Writer theatre producer screen writer. B. 20 Jan. 1880, Budapest. D. 27 Nov. 1953, London. Made stateless 1933 and reverted to his family's Hungarian nationality. Brief apprenticeship at Deutsches Theater, Berlin, 1899-1900. Associated with first performance of Kabarett Schall und Rauch. Acted in and owned many Berlin theatres in collaboration with C. Meinhard. Wrote texts for operettas, burlesques and films and was banned from directing in 1933. To England 1935 where he was closely associated with Schach, Goldschmid, and Zelnik, adapting *Land Without Music* (Capitol Films 1936 dir. Walter Forde), providing the story for *Southern Roses* and *The Lilac Domino* (Grafton Films 1937 dir. Fred Zelnik) and co-scr. *Mademoiselle Docteur* (Grafton Films 1937 dir. Edmond T. Gréville) and *Hatter's Castle* (Grafton 1940 dir. Lance Comfort) etc. During war involved with Black propaganda from Woburn Abbey.

Kürt (Curtis) Bernhardt: Director: B. 15. April 1899, Worms. D. 22 Feb. 1981, Pacific Palisades, USA. Married the English ballet dancer, Pearl Argyle. Studied for the stage in Frankfurt am-Main and then acted in touring companies until 1923 when he began acting

and directing for the stage in Berlin. 1926 dir. and co-wrote (with Carl Zuckmayer) his first film *War* (1925), financed by the KPD, then *Qualen der Nacht*. Many others, including UFA's first all-talking picture, *Die letzte Kompanie* (1931) and the two versions of *Der Tunnel* (1933) which he also co-scripted with Reinhart Steinbicker. Harassed by the Gestapo, he left in 1934 for France, where he had his own company. 1935 to England as production manager on *The Dictator* (Toeplitz 1935). First film as director in UK, *The Beloved Vagabond* (Toeplitz 1936) 1937. Founded British Unity Pictures, with Eugene Tuscherer, to make bi-linguals. 1940 to Hollywood, where he made successful formula pictures and returned briefly in the 1950s to the UK.

Francis Bieber: Diagram artist. B. Germany, 1918. Came to England as a refugee in 1933. Entered the film business in January 1943, working for Diagram Films Ltd.

Sybille (Sybilla) Binder (Tilde Binder). Actress. B. c.1900. D. 30 June 1962, Dusseldorf. Naturalized British citizen by marriage. Admired performer in Munich after 1915, also worked in Berlin, Vienna, and Zürich. She appeared in Brecht's first play *Baal* at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin in 1926. 1933 to Paris and then to UK. Contributed to BBC German Service after 1939. First film in England *Thunder Rock* (Charter 1942). After the war, she again worked in Germany, invited back by Gründgens.

Lajos Biró (Ludwig Biro, Lajos Biros): B. 1883, Magyard, Hungary. D. 1948, London. Playwright, scriptwriter. Education at Royal University Budapest. A leading Hungarian playwright, his biggest success was *Hotel Imperial*. After WW1, involved in revolutionary politics. Entered films 1924. Worked in Hollywood and wrote the original screen story for *The Last Command*. In UK joined Korda and co-adapted *Service for Ladies* (Paramount Brit.1932), and co-wrote the story writer of *Wedding Rehearsal* (LFP 1933). Subsequently scenario editor for London Films and contracted to MGM-Korda 1944-5.

Ludwig Blattner: B. 1884, Germany. D. 29 Oct. 1935, Elstree. (suicide). To England in 1897, entering the film business in 1907 when he became associated with Alexandra Hall, afterwards with the Winter Garden, New Brighton. An assistant manager and manager of other cinemas, he eventually controlled several small circuits, one of which included the Gaiety, Manchester. Sold his cinemas to BIP in Dec. 1927 and established the Ludwig Blattner Picture Corporation in May 1928 as a holding company for his production interests and for his colour and sound companies. He owned non-American rights to the Keller Dorian Lenticular colour system and developed the Blattnerphone, which incorporated the Stille sound recording system. Failed to adapt to sound, let down by backers, his systems unsuccessful, although the BBC did utilise the Blattnerphone, he sold his rights in the colour system to Technicolor and his rights in Lion Feuchtwanger's novel *Jew Süß* to Gaumont British.

Bagdad Bodlaender: Cameraman. B. 1914, Germany. Entered industry 1931. In 1941 at Paul Rotha Productions as 1st Assistant camera-man.

Ernest Borneman (Ernst Julius Wilhelm Bornemann): Novelist, jazz musician, film director, university academic. B. 12 April 1915, Berlin. Married Eva Geisel. Absconded from a school- holiday exchange in 1933 and claimed political status in Britain. Lost his German nationality in 1935. From 1935-38, employed as a script editor for Criterion Film Productions and contributed to *Film-Kurier* in Berlin until 1937. In 1935 he wrote pseudonymously the detective novel *The Face on the Cutting Room Floor* (1937) and, under his own name, *Tomorrow is Now* (1940). Sold scripts on jazz programmes to the BBC.

Interned in May 1940, sent to Canada and released in 1941 to join NFBC under John Grierson for whom he made many a number of films on ethnographic and anthropological subjects. Two films he made at this time are *Blitzkrieg Tactics* (with Lorne Green), a training film for the Canadian Tank Corps and *Zero Hour* (with Norman McLaren), about the Normandy beach battle. Head of the film section at UNESCO in Paris in 1947. Worked at head of Script Department at Granada television. Returned to Germany and later to Austria.

Hans Brahm (Hans Brehm, John Brahm): Director. B. 1893, Hamburg. D. 11 Oct. 1982. Married: Dolly Haas (div.) Son of the actor Ludwig Brahm and nephew of the theatrical producer Otto Brahm. Before WWI, he was a light comedian on the German and Prague stage. 1918, director of Burg Theater Vienna, director at Deutsches Künstlertheater Berlin and at the Lessing Theater Berlin. To Paris in 1935 where he produced and directed theatre and then to England. Supervised and directed films in UK before going to Hollywood to make relatively conventional movies, the best of them *film noir*. Only film in UK, as director, *Broken Blossoms* (Twick. 1935). After 1955, turned to television with television series and *Screen Director's Playhouse* (*Laura*), etc.

Joseph Braun: Cine-photographer. Worked on *Handle with Care*. No other information.

Ludwig Brav: Composer. German. Composed for documentaries, *Am Rande der Sahara*, *Achtung Australien! Achtung Asien!*, 1933. Composed music for the documentary *War Front* (Strand 1941 dir. John Eldridge).

Max Brenner: Editor. B. Magdeburg. Naturalized British subject. Entered film industry 1928 in Berlin on silent documentaries. Joined Tobis 1930 to edit films by Robert Siodmak, E. A. Dupont, Conrad Wiene etc. Left Germany 1933 to France and Holland. In Germany, he edited *Burning Secret* (from Stefan Zweig's novel), Richard Oswald's *Der Hauptmann von Kopenick*, and the German version of *Journey's End*, with Conrad Veidt. In Holland, he edited *The Good Hope*. 1935 to England at Joe Rock Studios. Edited features for Rock, Grosvenor, Columbia British etc. as well as a number of documentaries. His first film in England was *The Cardinal*. Worked in Paris in 1937. Worked again in Germany after the war.

Nicholas (Nikolaus) Brodsky: Composer. B. Odessa, Russia 1905. D. 25 Dec 1958. Naturalized British subject. Studied music in Russia, at various conservatories, in Rome, Vienna, and Budapest, where he earned a living playing piano. Many song hits and in all, he

wrote twenty operettas. Entered films in Vienna in 1930 with scores for musical films. England 1936. brought over by C.B. Cochran to compose for *Home and Beauty*. First British film *French Without Tears* (Two Cities 1939) and remained in Britain until after the war. In Hollywood he received five Academy Award nominations and wrote songs with Sammy Cahn for Mario Lanza films.

Jacques B. Brunius (Jacques Borel): Screen-writer, actor. B. 1906. Paris. D. 24, April 1967. Studied aeronautics. Entered films as an assistant to René Clair, Buñuel, and Renoir. acting in *Une Partie de Campagne* (1936). He was a member of the Surrealist Group and a member of Groupe Octobre. He directed a number of films in France, including *Autour d'une évasion* and *Violons d'Ingres* (1937). To Britain at the outbreak of war and joined the BBC European service in 1940, adopting the name Borel. Continued at BBC as a translator, often initiating projects, well into the fifties. He appeared in a wide variety of programmes, including *The Critics* and continued to act character parts in films, occasionally directing short films in England.

Fritz Brunn: Asst. director. German. Worked for Capitol Film Corporation in 1936 on the *Marriage of Corbal* (Gaumont British-Capitol dir. Karl Grune). No other information.

Moura (Countess) Budberg: Scenario editor. Formerly Moura von Benckendorff. B. 1894. D. 31 Oct., 1974. Daughter of a Russian senator and landowner. 1911, married von Benckendorff, a career diplomat shot by the Bolsheviks. Married Baron Budberg (d. 1926). Astonishing personal life, much of it detailed by Lockhart. In 1919, became Gorki's secretary. Wells brought her to London in 1934 where she met Korda for whom she sometime worked as a permanent personal assistant and scenario editor and later as a reader. Historical adviser on films.

Rudolph Cartier (Rudolf Katscher): Screen-writer, producer, director. B. 17 April 1904, Vienna. Naturalized British citizen. Trained as architect at Matura Art School, Vienna. Contributed to *Neues Tagblatt* from 1925 and specialised in mountaineering. Worked for Alfred Zeisler at UFA in Berlin from 1929-33, teaming with Egon Eis on many film scripts, the first of which was *Der Tiger*, 1933. In Austria in 1933 working with Sam Spiegel and then to London via Paris in 1935. Great difficulty establishing himself in Britain. His career in Britain took off in 1952 at the BBC where he produced and directed 125 plays and dramas. Worked on screenplay of *Man from Morocco* (A.B.P.C. 1945).

Hans Casparius: Photographer and short film maker. Dir of two companies, INCA (Independent Cine Art) Ltd. and Music in Miniature Films Ltd.

Ulrich Cassirer: Sound technician. B. Germany 1923. Made stateless by the Nazi. Early in 1942 employed as a trainee sound technician at Gainsborough Pictures (1928) Ltd.

Alberto Cavalcanti (Alberto de Almeida-Cavalcanti): Designer, director and producer. B. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 6 Feb. 1897. D. 25 Aug. 1982. Educated Geneva where he studied law and then architecture. Commenced career as art director with *L'Inhumaine* (1923) for

Marcel L'Herbier. In Paris produced, directed and wrote a number of films including *En Rade*, variously associated with French realism or 'experimental'. Grierson brought him into the documentary film in Britain and he became head of GPO Film Unit. In 1940 to Ealing Studios as director of documentaries and associate producer, also directing the features *Went the Day Well* and *Champagne Charlie*. 1949 to Brazil for *Vera Cruz*, where he was sacked for his political views and returned to Europe.

Eugene Cekalski: Director of documentaries. Polish. Dir. *This is Poland* (Concanen 1941).

Francis Chagrin (Alexander Pauker): composer. B. 5 Nov. 1905, Bucharest, Romania. Naturalized British citizen. Trained as an engineer in Zürich but simultaneously became interested in music, studying at the Zürich Conservatorium. In 1932, studied and worked in Paris under Paul Dukas and Nadia Boulanger and entered films in France in 1934. 1936 to England, where he studied under Matyas Seiber. First film in UK, *Five Faces* (Strand 1937). Composed numerous chamber works. During war worked on several films for Dutch Government and for Mol and wrote songs and French music for BBC, handling the music side of the BBC service to the French resistance.

Philip Charlot: Editor. Worked at LFP 1936, Pall Mall 1937, G&S 1938-39.

René Clair (René Chomette): Director. B. 11 Nov. 1898, Paris. D. 15 March 1981. During WWI in Ambulance Corps and drifted towards the cinema through journalism, writings on the cinema and for radio. He staged works by Picabia and the opera *Orphée* by Gluck. First film *Paris qui dort* in 1924 followed by *Entr'acte* (1924) and he went on to write and direct some of the most imaginative films of the early sound period: *Sous les Toits de Paris*, *Le Million* and *A Nous la Liberté*. By 1935 he was in UK, writing and editing, sometimes uncredited, for Korda for whom he directed *The Ghost Goes West* (1935). Also directed *Break the News* (Jack Buchanan 1937) before going to US. Returned to France after the war.

Henry (Heinz) Cornelius (Owen Henry Cornelius): director. B. 18 Aug. 1913, Berlin of German parents with South African nationality. D. 2 May 1958, London. Education at École de Journalism, Sorbonne. In 1931 he studied under Max Reinhardt on a course for producers and in 1933, produced plays at Schiller Theater. To France in 1933 where worked as a journalist and then as a film editor at the Studios de Montrouge Went to South Africa to acquire South African nationality and came to England in 1935 to join editing department of LFP as asst. editor on *The Ghost Goes West* (LFP 1935 dir. René Clair). Editor on *The Drum* (LFP 1938, dir. Zoltan Korda). Illness took him to South Africa for the climate and was caught by the war where he worked for the Film Department of Union Unity, Johannesburg, part of the South African propaganda services, becoming deputy director of the organisation, writing, directing and editing fourteen films in English and Afrikans. In 1943 joined Ealing and was associate producer on *Painted Boats* (1945), *Hue and Cry* (1946), and *It Always*

Rains on Sunday (1947) on which he also worked on the script. His film directing — five films — all after the war, was strongly influenced by René Clair and began with *Passport to Pimlico* in 1949.

Kurt (Curt, Curtis) Courant: Cine-photographer. B. 11 May 1899, Poland. D. 1968. Father of the cine-photographer Willy Kurant. Began filming in Italy and worked on *Cabiria* (1912) and *Quo Vadis* (1925). German work included Joe May's *Hilde Warren und der Tod* (1917). 1933 to France and then to England. One of the most eminent of all black and white photographers. His reputation is founded on films such as Carné's *Le Jour se Lève* and Renoir's *La Bête Humaine*. First film in England *Perfect Understanding* (Gloria Swanson Productions 1933 dir. Cyril Gardner). To Hollywood in 1941, where he was refused union membership and found little work.

Irmgard (Irma) von Cube: Writer. Provided co-story for *Mademoiselle Docteur* (Grafton Films 1937 dir. Edmond T. Gréville) and *My Song For You* (Cine-Allianz Tonfilm 1934 dir. Maurice Elvey).

Paul Czinner: Director. B. 30 May 1890 Budapest. D. 22 June 1972, London,. Naturalized British Citizen 1938. Married: Elisabeth Bergner. A child prodigy violinist. Prior to 1914 and appeared as an actor in 1918. To Vienna, where he made his first film *Homo Immanis*. Then to Germany. Came briefly to England to direct the silent *The Woman He Scorned* (Charles Whittaker Prods. 1929) with Pola Negri. To England in June 1932 with his wife and Carl Mayer, who had scripted some of his films. In America during the war where he directed his wife on the stage in *Miss Julie*, etc. After the war he directed multi-camera records of operas and ballets.

Monja Danischewsky: Producer. B. Archangel 1911. Educated at Royal College of Art. Journalist and painter. Began in publicity department of MGM and moved to British Lion and then Capitol. 1938 in charge of publicity at Ealing. Collaborated on the screenplays of *Undercover* (1943) and *Greek Testament* (1943). 1948, graduated to Associate Producer (on *Whisky Galore* 1949). Subsequently became a producer. Illness terminated his career.

Maxime-Jacques de Cadenet: Cameraman. B. France, 1918. Entered film industry in France in 1937 but came to Britain at the outbreak of war and joined the Fighting French Forces-Information Service, a Lieutenant in the film unit.

Adrian de Potier: Assistant sound and film editor. B. France, 1921. He first entered films at Merton Park Studios in 1943, as a trainee in the sound department. In 1944 working at Crown Film Unit as an assistant film editor.

Henry de Rochefurt: (Prince Leopold Loewenstein Wertheim): Screen-writer. B. Salzburg, 13 March 1903. Attended the University of Vienna. England 1926, naturalized 1935. Wrote novels and entered films in 1937 working 'on a series of psychological films' and collaborating on screenplays of French produced films. During war worked as screen-writer of documentaries.

André de Toth (Andreas Toth): B. 1900, Makò, Hungary. Education in Budapest. Married; Veronica Lake (div.). Went into theatre and in 1928 produced his first play but then studied law at Hungarian Royal University. Worked as an actor, an editor, a writer, and a 2nd.-unit director in Hungary and later, in 1938, in Germany. Began directing 1939 in Hungary and filmed the German invasion of Poland. To UK, where he worked as 2nd.-unit director on *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940). 1941, to Hollywood where, after a struggle, he directed generally second-rate material. Worked in Europe and Britain after 1959.

Michael Delomov: Assistant director. Russian, working at Excelsior Films early in war.

Paul Demel: Actor: B. Brno, Czechoslovakia, May 14, 1903. D. Aug., 1951, Munich. Appeared in a variety of German, Austrian and Czech films. Appeared on British stage before the war and first appeared in *We Dive at Dawn* (Gainsborough 1943 dir, Anthony Asquith).

Tamara Desni: Actress. B. Kharkov, Russia 22 Oct. 1913. Trained as a ballet dancer under Madame Nijinska and Develler. Married Raymond Lovell. Acted in German films from 1931 but was in England in 1932 and appeared on the stage in *Casanova*. Many British films followed, of which the first was *Falling for You* (Gainsborough 1933 dir. Robert Stevenson and Jack Hulbert). During the war she became a nurse. Appeared on radio.

Ernst Deutsch (Ernest Dorian): Actor. B. 16 Sept. 1890 Prague. D. 22 March 1969, Berlin. Naturalized American citizen. 1914-1915 appeared at the Volksbühne, Vienna. Appeared in numerous silent films, starting with *Die Rache der Toten* and half a dozen sound films in Germany before leaving for England in 1935, where he appeared in *The Marriage of Corbal* (Capitol Films 1936 dir. Karl Grune). Soon in USA where he appeared on stage and screen. In 1947, he returned to Vienna, working in Austria and Germany and appearing in *The Third Man* (1949).

Louis de Wohl (Ludwig von Wohl): Novelist, scenario writer, astrologer. B. 24 Jan. 1903, Berlin. Author of *The Last Company* (Bernhardt) in Berlin and of *Crime Over London* (Criterion dir. Alfred Zeisler) in Britain, etc. Described in Lockhart's *Diaries* and involved in the creation of the Brandt-Rasputin Booklet, a 24 page war-time black propaganda forgery and the bogus astrological magazine called *Der Zenit*.

Dragutin Domac: Cameraman. B. 1915, Yugoslavia. An enthusiastic film maker from 1930, he was in Britain early in the war where, in 1943, he was working for the film unit at the Royal Yugoslav Government, London.

Ewald André (Andreas) Dupont: Director. B. 25 Dec. 1891 Zeitz (Sachsen) Germany. D. 12 Dec. 1956 Hollywood. Studied at University of Berlin. Worked as a journalist and then an early German film critic for *Berliner Zeitung am Mittag*. Brought into cinema by Pommer. First film (which he also co-scripted) probably *Europa-Postlager-na!* (1917). Later contracted to Carl Laemmle at Universal. To England in late 1920s, where he formed Carr-Gloria-Dupont Productions and directed three bi-linguals beginning with *Moulin Rouge* (BIP

1928). In 1933, again to Hollywood. He struck one of the Bowery Boys in 1939 and was unable to work for many years. Consequently he turned to journalism, 1941-49, editing *Hollywood Tribune*, and became an agent and talent scout. 1951 back to film-making.

Josef Durham: Actor. See Josef Almas.

Eleonore Eggert: Laboratory technician. B. 1910, Germany. Entered films in 1940 at Technicolor as a chemicals assistant.

Martha Eggerth: Actress, singer. B. 17 April 1912, Budapest, Hungary. Married to singer John Kiepura. Appeared on stage in 1924 as a doll in *The Tales of Hoffmann*. 1930, also as a doll in the French musical, *Maniquin*. Appeared in Vienna, 1930, in *The Violet of Montmartre* and many films. In early thirties made two films in England, *Where Is This Lady?* (Amalgamated Films Association 1932, dir. Ladislaus Vajda) and *My Heart is Calling* (G-B and Cine-Allianz Tonfilm 1935, dir. Carmine Gallone). Emigrated to USA 1940. Returned to Europe after the war.

Richard Eichberg: Producer, director. B. 27 Oct. 1888, Berlin. D. 8 May 1953, Munich. Acted in over a hundred silent films. Produced and directed extensively, producing virtually all the films which he directed. Discovered Lilian Harvey. Dir. four bi-linguals in England between 1929 and 1931 and emigrated to USA in 1938. Returned to Germany 1948.

Hanns Eisler: Composer. B. 6 July 1898 Leipzig. D. 6 Sept. 1962, Berlin, GDR. Studied music under Schoenberg and Webern, Vienna. 1924 to Berlin. Worked with Brecht and Slatan Dudow on *Kuhle Wampe*. 1933, left Germany. First film score for Ruttman's *Opus 1 ii* (1925). Scores for Joris Ivens as well. Composed film music for Soviet, French, British and American films, including Lang's *Hangmen Also Die* and Alain Resnais's *Nuit et Brouillard*. In UK in 1934 wrote score for *Abdul The Damned* (Capitol-BIP dir. Karl Grune). USA in 1938. Jan. 1949, to GDR.

Sean Frederic Eisler: B. Germany. Early in war was working at Verity Films Ltd. as scenarist and assistant in Production Department. Credited with a war documentary, *NAAFI*.

Henry Elwis: Animator. B. Germany. In Britain in 1930s and 1940s with British Animated Films. During the war he was in the Pioneer Corps.

Carl Esmond (Willy Eichberger): Actor. B. 14 June 1905, Vienna. Attended University of Vienna. A stage actor in Vienna and Berlin, he appeared in both classical and modern drama. To England in 1933 where his first film was *Evensong* (Gaumont British 1934 dir. Victor Saville). In 1938 he went to Hollywood.

Alexander (Alexandre) Esway: Director. B. 1900, Debreczin, Hungary. D. 23 Aug, 1947. St. Tropez. Attended the University of Budapest. Fought as an officer in WWI, after which he acted as a secretary to Lajos Biró, Cultural Officer of der Räterepublic. Journalist, also wrote for the stage, entering films in Berlin in 1922, writing and directing original stories for UFA and DIS (Berlin). Worked on the UFA films *Die Dame mit der Maske* and

Herkules Meyer (1928). In Hollywood, where he was employed by Lubitsch and Jannings. In Britain he directed the silent sequences of *Taxi for Two* (Gainsborough 1929). Back in Germany he directed *Kinder des Glücks* (1931) and in Paris he co-directed *Mauvaise Graine* (1933) with Billy Wilder. In Britain again he directed shorts and features for Gainsborough, London Films and others, including BIP, and Columbia, along with a number of commercial shorts (one and two reelers) at London Films for EDA (Electricity Development Association) 1934-5 and formed Atlantic Films Productions in Nov. 1935 to produce *Thunder in the City*, a commercial failure. In France he became something of 'a French Capra' directing *Hercule* (1937) and *L'Homme qui cherche la vérité* (1939) which starred Fernandel and Louis Jouvert. Naturalized, he volunteered for the French Air Force and spent two years in a POW camp, after which he went to Hollywood, worked on *The Cross of Lorraine* and directed *Steppin in Society* (Republic 1945). He returned to France where he directed two comedies

Tony François Etienne: Dialogue-dubbing writer. B. Belgium 1909. Entered film industry in 1924. In Britain during the forties, he was working at the British Commonwealth Film Corporation Ltd. in 1944.

Jacques Fairbank: B. 1928, France. Entered film industry in 1945, working as an apprentice in the camera department of the Crown Film Unit.

Friedrich (Frederic) Feher: Director. B. 16 March 1895, Vienna. D. Hollywood. Married: the singer Magda Sonja. Trained at Konservatorium, Vienna and acted at the *Deutschestheater*, Berlin and at theatres in Vienna, Prague, and Hamburg. Acted in the films *William Tell* (1914) and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919). Rarely acted after 1920, concentrating on directing. From 1924-25, he was director of the Renaissance Theater, Vienna. Directed around twenty films in Germany, including *Sensations-Prozeß* (1928) and *Gehetzte Menschen* (1932 with Heinrich Fraenkel). In UK, he formed Concordia Films and made *The Robber Symphony* (Concordia 1936), the first 'pre-scored film'. To Hollywood in 1939, where he acted and directed musical shorts.

Rudi Fehr: Editor Production executive. B. 6 July 1911, Germany, son of a banker. Married the actress Maris Wrixon. Worked in Berlin for Tobis-Klang-Film, Munich and Vienna, where he was taken by Rudolph Katscher (Cartier) to work on *Unsichtbare Gegner*. He came to Britain and edited one version of the bilingual, *The Invader* (British and Continental) before going to the USA in 1938 where he had a successful career as an editor for Warner Bros, and edited for Hitchcock among others.

Hans Feld: Critic. B. 15 July, 1902, Berlin. Critic, signing himself as d. and editor of *Film-Kurier*, Berlin, 1926-32. Left Germany, 1932 for Vienna and in 1933 for Prague where he edited and published a literary journal, *Kritik*. To UK in 1935, where he worked a little for the GPO Film Unit before becoming editor of *World Film News*, but abandoned it for business, importing tomato purée.

Alice Fenyues: Animator. B. Hungary, 1924. She was working at Anson-Dyer at the beginning of the war. Interned in September 1940 and on her release she accepted jobs as directed by the MoL and in August 1944 took a job as assistant animator at Basic Films.

Herman (Hermann) Fellner: Director. B. 26 March 1878, Frankfurt am-Main. D. March 1936 (suicide). As early as 1908 he was working with Joseph Somlo in Austria, but worked also in theatre throughout Europe and America. In films since 1912. 1922, formed Fellner-Somlo Films, in Berlin, which in 1924 became Felson-Film der UFA. An Impresario of musical comedy and the person who brought *The Merry Widow* to Britain. He came to London in 1933, via Paris and in the same year became production manager at Gaumont British Picture Corp. Ltd. and Gainsborough Pictures (1928) Ltd. He co-produced, with Max Schach, *Dishonour Bright* (Cecil Film Co. 1936 dir. Tom Walls) and produced *Public Nuisance No 1* (Cecil Film Co. 1936 dir. Marcel Varnel) committing suicide shortly after the completion of the latter.

Ignaz Fleminger: Film editor and cutter. B. Austria, 1889. He produced his own films (most likely newsreels) in Austria, but in England during the early forties was only able to work as an editor. In 1942, he was working for Gaumont British News Screen.

Heinrich Fraenkel: Publicist, writer. B. 28 September 1897, Lissa, Poland. Education at the Universities of Berlin and Frankfurt am-Main. Interned, first in WW1, from 1914-18, where he learnt English, secondly in 1940, where he wrote *Help Us Germans to beat Hitler*. Worked in script department at Gaumont-British in 1933 and scripted *Mr. Cohen Takes a Walk* for Paul Grätz in 1935. During the war an opponent of Vansittart. He subsequently wrote on German cinema, among other subjects, sometimes with Roger Manvell.

Stefan Fraenkel: Lab. technician. B. Austria, 1900. Entered film industry in Austria but dropped out, returning as an asst. grader at Technicolor Ltd. in 1943.

Amy Frank (Emmy Richter): Actress. B. Czechoslovakia 1896. Educated in Vienna. Married to the actor Friedrich Richter. On stage in 1920 in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. First appeared on London stage in 1939 in plays such as *Claudia* and *The First Gentleman* and appeared in German Service of BBC during the war. Films in Berlin but screen debut in England not until 1946 in *While the Sun Shines* (International Screenplays). She and her husband returned to Germany in 1948.

Karl Heinz Frank: 'Dubbing Expert'. B. Germany, 1910. Early in the war was working at Anglo-American Film Corporation.

Coleman Freeman: B. Russia. Entered films in early 1930s. In early 1940s was a charge hand at BAF Ltd.

Eugene Frenke: Director. Married: Anna Sten. Director of Victoria Films (1935). Directed *A Woman Alone* (Garrett-Klement Pictures 1936 in England).

Adolphe Fried: Producer-director. Managing director of Film Sales Ltd., distributed films from J. Widgely Newman. As director of Ariston Films Ltd. produced travel and

'interest' shorts.

Erich (Eric, Erik) Freund: Director, actor. B. 4 April 1902, Berlin. D. 12 May 1958 Berlin (Schöneiche). Worked in Theatre-film und Rundfunktatigkeit 1933. Left Germany for Czechoslovakia and Poland before coming to England in 1938. Associated with the Free German League of Culture. Interned in 1940, he afterwards worked at the BBC for the duration of the war. First film in UK, *The First of the Few* (Melbourne/British Aviation 1942 dir. Leslie Howard). After the war, he both acted and directed in Germany.

Carmine Gallone: Director. B. 1886, Sorrento. D. 12 March 1973, Italy. Married: the actress Soava Gallone, whom he also directed. In films since 1913, when he directed *Il Bacio di Cirano*. In all he directed nearly 100 films. His *City of Song* (BSFP 1931) was the first of all the 'operatic' films of the thirties. He filmed in all the European capitals. He returned to Italy in 1935.

Alexander (Sascha) Galperson: Executive producer. B. 10 May 1897, Rovno, Russia. D. Dec. 1949, London. Naturalized British subject. Education at University of Kiev. 1924. Entered films in Berlin. 1931 to England, associated with Czinner and Bergner in England. 1943-May 1946, director of Two Cities with Del Giudice. Also worked for BBC Russian Dept. during the war. 1945, director of This Modern Age Ltd. 1947, became a producer for Two Cities and produced *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill* (dir. Laurence Huntington, 1948). A brilliant negotiator.

Filippo Del Giudice: Managing director of Two Cities and, after 1947, Pilgrim Films. B. 26 March, 1892, Trani (Bari), Italy. D. 31 Dec., 1962, Florence, Italy. Educated in law at University of Rome. Attorney-at-law (LLD) and fled from Italy to England in December 1932. In 1936, he advised Toeplitz on the Bette Davis-Warner Bros. case and in 1937 they set up Two Cities, Del Giudice being the legal adviser. He became director and general manager and, in July 1942, its managing director. Formed Cineguild with David Lean and Anthony Havelock Allen and entered the Rank umbrella of Independent Producers in 1942, responsible for *In Which We Serve*, *Henry V*, *This Happy Breed*, *The Way to The Stars*, and *Odd Man Out*. Lockhart considered him 'a great showman', at his cynical best in the election of 1945. When Rank took control he left to form Pilgrim Pictures and later entered a monastery.

Viktor Gluck: Chief laboratory technician. B. 1898, Austria. Entered the film business in 1909. In England was a partner in British Chemicolour Ltd. along with Grune and Kanturek in 1937.

Walter Goehr: Conductor and composer. B. 28 May, 1903 Berlin. D. 4 Dec. 1960, Sheffield. Naturalized British subject, 1940. Education at Prussian Academy of Arts, and studied composition under Arnold Schoenberg at Berlin Academy of Fine Arts and Music. Orchestral and chamber works performed on German radio between 1924 and 1930. Worked as a conductor for radio and in theatres from 1925 and composed the first radio-opera

Malpopita. 1933 to England as musical director for Columbia Gramophone Company Ltd. Used the name George Walter until 1948 when conducting the Orchestre Raymonde and for incidental film music in 1930s. For many years associated with BBC, mainly as a conductor and arranger, and brought many modern composers to the attention of British audiences: Tippett, Britten, Messiaen, and Sciber among others. From 1 Sept. 1946-9 conductor and programme head of BBC Theatre Orchestra. Wrote screen music before coming to England and was music director on a number of films from 1936 onwards before, in 1940 began writing incidental music for issues of *Gaumont British News*. Early films include *For Freedom* (Gaumont British 1940) and *The Ghost Train* (Gainsborough 1941). In 1943 began conducting the Allan Gray scores for the Archers films. In 1946 wrote score for *Great Expectations* (Cineguild 1947 dir. David Lean).

Kurt Goldberger: Sound camera operator. B. Czechoslovakia. In films in Czechoslovakia. During war was employed at 20th. Century Fox, Lime Grove.

Isadore Goldsmith (né **Goldschmid** sometimes **Goldschmidt**): Producer. B. 26 May, 1893, Vienna. D. 8 October 1964, Putney, Vermont, USA. Married the novelist Vera Caspary. Naturalized British citizen; naturalized American citizen, 1952. Early career in the Austro-Hungarian consular service, but by 1918 was in film business where he became managing director of Apollo Films, Vienna. 1925 Continental representative for BIP, with its headquarters in Berlin, whilst also working for Süd Film Co., a BIP subsidiary. 1931 to England as independent producer. First film in Britain *Southern Roses* (Capitol-Grafton 1936 dir. Fred Zelnik). Later *Mademoiselle Docteur* (Trafalgar 1937 dir. Edmond T. Gréville). Took over the Schach Grune project *The Stars Look Down* (Grafton Films 1939 dir. Carol Reed) at a budget of £100 000.

Frederic Gotfurt (**Frederick Gotfurt**, **Fritz Gottfurcht**): Screen-writer. B. Berlin, 8 Aug. 1901. D. 26 Feb. 1973, London. Naturalized British Citizen. Edited the journal *Der Feuerreiter* from 1921 onwards wrote a number of serialized pot-boilers and ran the literary cabaret Larifari in Berlin throughout the late twenties and early thirties. He wrote the cabarets and Allan Gray composed the music, Rosa Valetti was its star and Dolly Haas also performed there. Left Berlin for Paris 1933, sharing a flat with Hermann Kosterlitz (= Henry Koster) who started him in films as a scenario writer on *Le Train pour Venise*. To UK in 1934. Little film work in 1930s but wrote *Mr. Gulliver Goes to Town* with Egon Larsen for FDKB in 1942, which led to a contract with ABPC where he became head of scenario department. He and his wife, Dorothea (who had a small cabaret and film career) wrote for television and he adapted the five-part *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Paul Grätz (**Graetz**): B. 1893. D. 1937, Hollywood. Cabaret artist and actor in Berlin. He appeared in a number of German films before Hitler came to power. To UK via Paris in 1933, where he made a handful of films before going to Hollywood.

Allan Gray (Josef Smigrod): Composer. B. Tarnow, Poland 2 Feb.1902. D. 14 Sept. 1973. Education at at Universities of Berlin and Heidelberg (Musikgeschichte), and the Arnold Schoenberg Schule, Berlin from 1926-1929. Wrote for radio and for the cabaret Larifari as well as other revues. Lifelong friend of Weill, Brecht, Furtwängler, and other eminent figures of the twenties and early thirties. A musical director to Max Reinhardt, he wrote a childrens' opera *Wavelength ABC*. Entered films in Berlin in 1931 at UFA with score for *Emil und die Detective* (UFA) and co-scores for *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (Allianz), *FP.1 antwortet nicht* (UFA-GB), and *Die Gräfin von Monte Christo*. To England 1936. Talented arranger he composed for The Archers and for theatre, including the Peter Brook-Stratford production of *Loves Labours Lost* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. After the war his most notable score was for Huston's *The African Queen*.

Ulf Greeber: Cameraman. B. Norway, 1913. Entered films in 1936 and was in Britain early in the war, working, in 1942, for the Royal Norwegian Government Information Offices.

Max Greene (Mutz Greenbaum): Cine-photographer, asst. producer, director. B. 3 Feb. 1896, New York. D. July 1968, London. Entered film industry in 1914 in his father's company [Julius] Greenbaum Films. 1916 photographed his first film, for Max Mack, *Der Fakir im Frack*. Came to UK as chief photographer for GB at Lime Grove and Gainsborough. His first film in England was *Hindle Wakes* (Gainsborough 1931 dir. Victor Saville). Later in his career he directed and acted as assistant producer. In 1944, he was chief camera-man at Charter Film Productions. His speciality was the use of low key lighting and he provided the glow to the Wilcox films of the forties and fifties, but also worked with the Boulting Brothers. His own company was called Greenbaum Productions.

Edmond T. Gréville: Director. B. 20 June 1906, Nice. D. 1966 (suicide). The son of a Protestant minister, he began as a journalist and made an advertising film for the magazine *Vu*, for which he was working, in 1929. More advertising films and experimental films followed. He became an assistant dir. to Gance, Dupont, and Genina, acted in Clair's *Sous les Toits* and became a director in 1931. His first film was *Le Train des Suicides*. He made a few films in UK, the first *Gypsy Melody* (British Artistic Films 1936), for his own company. During the war he was in France, but he directed again in UK after the war.

Bernard Grün: Composer. B. 1901, Czechoslovakia. Naturalized British citizen. Studied music in Vienna and Prague and composed over thirty operettas and light operas which performed in Berlin, Vienna, Prague and London. Entered films in 1930 with scores for numerous French, German and Czech films, including *Ein Auto und kein Geld*. Wrote *Balalaika* with Eric Maschwitz in Vienna, which was produced by Leontine Sagan in London in 1936. To Britain but only entered films in Britain after the war with the score for *White Cradle Inn* (Peak Films 1947, dir. Harold French). His music includes that for Rank's *This Modern Age*.

Karl Grune: Producer director. B. 22 Jan. 1890 Vienna, a Czechoslovakian citizen. D.

Nov. 1962 Bournemouth. Trained at Imperial Academy for Dramatic Art, Vienna and toured the Austrian provincial theatres and later joined the newly opened Volksbühne. Joined Reinhardt Deutsches Theater in Berlin. Director of Residentheater. He met Max Schach with whom he became closely associated in 1918 and became a director with Alfa in Berlin, his first film being *Aus eines Mannes Mädchenjahren* (1919). He is known for *Die Strasse /The Street* (Stern Film 1923). He was vice-president of Dacho, the organisation of German film producers until 1930. Resigned from Emelka Studios in 1931 along with Schach and left Germany for Paris, where he made *La Maison Jaune* (1932). Then to England. His first film in England was *Abdul the Damned* (BIP-CFC 1935). His career ended with the collapse of Capitol although he co-produced one film after the war, *The Silver Darlings* (Holyrood 1947, dir. Clarence Elder and Clifford Evans).

Anatole de Grunwald: Producer, writer. B. 25 Dec., 1910, St Petersburg. D. 13 Jan. 1967, London. Father, a diplomat in Tsarist Russia, emigrated during the Revolution. Education at Caius College, Cambridge and at Sorbonne. Career began as a journalist and then assistant to Anthony Asquith. From 1939-41, best known as a writer for Asquith and Leslie Howard. First film, co-writer on *French Without Tears* (Two Cities 1939 dir. Anthony Asquith) and his first real success was *Pimpernel Smith* (British National 1941 dir. Leslie Howard). Became a director of Two Cities. Something of a talent scout. After war formed own production company and director of Comet Film Productions Ltd. First film as producer only *The Queen of Spades* (ABPC-World Screenplays 1949 dir. Thorold Dickinson).

Philipp Guidobaldi (Filippo Guidobaldi): Supervisor of miniatures, models, and special effects. B. 1898, Italy. Entered film business in 1921. Among the films on which he worked are *Rome Express* (Gaumont British 1932 dir. Walter Forde) and *The Tunnel* (Gaumont-British 1935 dir. Maurice Elvey). Later worked for Disney.

Eva Guiller: Lab. Asst. B. Russia, 1903. Naturalized German. Entered film industry in 1943, when she was employed at Technicolor, grading film.

Gabrielle Gutkind: Lab. technician. B. Germany, 1918. Stateless during the war. In 1943 took a job at Technicolor Ltd. as a control assistant in the transfer department.

Oswald Haffenrichter: Editor. B. 10 April 1899, Oplotnitz, Yugoslavia (or Styria, Austria) D. 18 May 1973. Education at Universities of Graz and Vienna. Studied medicine, but turned to photography and entered films in 1925 for UFA, editing over thirty films in Berlin, Prague, Paris, Vienna and Rome, among them *Mädchen in Uniform* (Deutsches Film 1931 dir. Leontine Sagan) and a series of musical films featuring the singers Jan Kiepura, Gitta Alpar, Benjamino Gigli. He was a member of the German Communist Party in the 1930s and was three times arrested by the Nazis. At the outbreak of war he joined the French army and was attached to BEF until the fall of France, when he joined the British Army only to be invalided out of the Pioneer Corps. Editor on a series of Strand documentaries for the Mol. In 1947 he joined LFP, his first film being *An Ideal Husband*. In 1950, he went to

Brazil, at Cavalcanti's request, to help build the industry and edited *O Cangaceiro*. On his return to the UK, he found it difficult to find work.

Dolly Haas: Actress. B. 29 April 1911, Hamburg. Married: 1. the director, Johannes Brahm (Hans Brahm, John Brahm) (div.), 2. the cartoonist, Al Hirshfield. Danced at the Hamburg Opera as a child and was introduced to Erik Charell by Max Pallenberg who put her into *The Nelson Revue*. She also appeared in the cabarets *Katakombe* and *Larifari*. First film *Eine Stunde Glück*. Left Germany via England for USA. First film in England *Broken Blossoms* (Twickenham 1936 dir. Hans Brahm). Occasional screen and stage appearances in America after the war.

Julius Hagen (Julius Jacob Kleimenhagen): Producer. B. Hamburg 1884. D. London 31 Jan. 1940. To Britain as a child and Naturalized British citizen. After early theatrical experience he joined Ruffels and Essanay employed him to break boycott of Chaplin films. Joined Stoll and then became London Manager for Universal and general manager for Astra. Created W. P. Film Company with J. B. Williams and produced a number of films including *Adventures of the Flag Lieutenant*. Formed Strand Film Company, later Twickenham Film Productions and Twickenham Film Distributors. His studio was in constant use and he produced *The Wandering Jew* (Maurice Elvey) and *Broken Blossoms* (Hans Brahm) as well as numerous others, mostly poor. Distribution was unsatisfactory and companies collapsed in 1937.

Eva Haimann: Lab Assistant. B. 1920, Germany. Entered film industry in 1939. In 1942 she was employed by Technicolor as a quality negative checker.

Julius Haimann: Producer. B. 1888. D. 30 Jan. 1939, London. Pioneer of German musical cinema. In Germany, he was responsible for *Two Hearts in Waltz Time* and *Prince of Arcadia* as well as two films not shown in Britain *Das Lied is Aus* and *Liebeskommando*. To UK in 1933, where his first film was *You Made Me Love You* (BIP 1933).

Erik Hakim: Distributor/Producer. B. 1889. Long-time in England. Exploited German and Russian films in Britain. with high standard orchestral settings for silent films. Managing director of a chain of cinemas. Entered production with *The Outsider* (1931) and *Two White Arms* (1932).

John Halas (Halasz): Animator and Executive producer. B. 16 April 1912, Budapest, Hungary. Married Joy Batchelor. Trained in Graphic design under Alexander Bortnyk and Moholy-Nagy. Entered film industry as assistant to George Pal, April 1928-31. Began to produce his own cartoons in 1934. To England 1936, where he formed Halas-Batchelor Cartoons in 1940, the most successful animation company of its time in Britain. Numerous films for Mol and the War Office during war.

Philo Hauser: Actor. B. 9 May 1915 Graz. Studied for stage in Vienna and made his theatrical debut in 1935, also appearing in films in Austria and Germany before leaving for Belgium in 1938. To England in 1939, classified as a 'Friendly alien — a refugee from Nazi oppression'. In early part of the war worked in a factory in Salford but broadcast with BBC

European Service. London stage debut in 1942. Entered British films after the war with *Against the Wind* (Ealing 1948 dir. Charles Crichton).

Albert Haymsen: Film Editor. B. Yugoslavia, 1893. Entered film business in 1922 working for Super-Film Production Ltd. and for Fellner and Somlo Ltd. in Berlin and Vienna. He left Germany in 1933 and was made stateless. Initially, the only work he was able to get was as a driver for Josef Somlo, who eventually employed him as an assistant editor.

Hein Heckroth: Designer. B. 14 April 1898, Giessen. D. 6 July 1970, Al Kinaer, Holland. Trained in fine Art, by 1917 he was designing sets and costumes for theatre — mostly ballet — and became the chief designer for the Jooss Ballet which, in England, established itself at Dartington. Interned in Australia in 1940 he afterwards worked on Jooss projects and then theatre and cinema, his first film-work being on Gabriel Pascal's *Caesar and Cleopatra* (IP-Pascal 1946 dir. Gabriel Pascal) as assistant art director. He joined Arthur Lawson in Alfred Junge's team after the war, working on the Powell-Pressburger films.

Gerard Heinz (Gerard Gerald Hinze): Actor. B. 2 Jan. 1904, Hamburg. D. 21 November 1972. First appeared on stage in 1922 and worked on radio in Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and London. First film appearance in Berlin 1928 and subsequently made films in Prague, Vienna and Berlin. In a concentration camp for a year in 1933 and came to England in 1938 where he appeared on stage, first at Covent Garden Theatre in the *Bartered Bride*. He was interned in 1940 and shipped overseas, but later appeared in operetta and worked for the German Service of the BBC. First British film *Thunder Rock* (Charter 1942 dir. John Boulting). After the war, films include *State Secret* and *My Daughter Joy*.

Heitfeld. Make up expert who trained many British technicians.

Otto Heller: Cinematographer B. 8 March 1896 Prague, Czechoslovakia. D. 19 February 1970 Middlesex. Naturalized British citizen 1946. Photographed over 150 films on Continent, many with Karel (Carl) Lamac, the scriptwriter, Vclav Wasserman and Anny Ondra. Worked professionally after 1918. 1918-28 worked in Czechoslovakia. 1928-30, he also worked in Germany and from 1930-34 he worked entirely in Germany. To England in 1934 but back to France shortly after. His first British film, *The Amazing Quest of Ernest Bliss* (Garrett-Klement 1936 dir. Alfred Zeisler) was followed by *The High Command* (Fanfare Pictures 1937 dir. Thorold Dickinson). In 1940, he escaped to Britain and joined Czech Air Force, but was soon filming. First film in England after his return *Alibi* (Corona Productions 1942 dir. Brian Desmond Hurst). He worked on a wide range of British films and in 1944 was chief camera-man at WB-First National Productions Ltd.

Marcel Hellman: Producer. B. 31 May 1898, Bucharest. D. 1986 London. Entered films as producer and managing director of Seymour Nebenzahl's, Nero Films, 1924-27. His first film independent film, a co-production, was for Greenbaum Films, *Der Geheime Kurier* (*Rouge et Noir* in France), starring Mosjoukine and Lil Dagover. 1930-33 managing director

of his own Matador Films, Berlin, producing co-productions with Pathé Cinema Consortium in France, with Jean Gabin in two of them. Produced the Bergner *Der träumende Mund* (1932). As a Roumanian was able to leave Germany with all his property and came to England 1935. In 1936, with Douglas Fairbanks Jnr., founded Criterion Films. First film in Britain *The Amateur Gentleman* for Criterion, 1936. After the demise of Criterion he formed Tansa Films Ltd.; later Excelsior Film Productions Ltd. and Marcel Hellman Productions.

Paul Henried (Paul Georg Julius von Henried): Actor, director. B. 10 Jan. 1908, Trieste. Naturalized American citizen. Son of a Viennese banker. Education at Institute of Graphic Arts but also studied acting. Worked in publishing as a graphic designer and was noticed by Otto Preminger who was managing director for Max Reinhardt in Vienna and then acted in films, including *Hohne Schule* (1934). To UK 1935 where he appeared on stage, in *Café Chantant*, *Victoria Regina*, and *Jersey Lilly* (1940) as well as two films. Then to USA. In 1950s, directed and acted in both features and TV films. First film appearance in UK *Victoria the Great* (Imperator 1937, dir. Herbert Wilcox).

Erwin Hillier: Lighting camera-man. B. Vienna 1911 and went, with family to Berlin. Education at Reiman Schule for painting and Berlin Academy for Arts. Enjoyed dual nationality because of his father, having worked for Cunard, was able to obtain British nationality. Entered films as camera-asst. on Fritz Lang's *M* in 1931. Soon after in Britain, where he was asst. on a number of the more interesting films of the early thirties, the first of which was *I Was a Spy* (Gaumont British 1933, dir. Victor Saville). During the war was an ambulance driver and was sent into Holland on a intelligence mission prior to the Battle of Arnhem. He worked with Hitchcock, Lothar Mendes, Michael Powell, Cameron Menzies, before lighting his first film, *The Lady from Lisbon* (British National-Shaftesbury 1942, dir. Leslie Hiscot). Photographed films for the Archers and, notably, for Michael Anderson.

George M. H. Höllering (Hoellering): Editor, screen-writer, producer, director, cinema proprietor. B. 20 July 1898, Baden, died 10 Feb. 1980. London. Produced films in Austria, Hungary and Germany. He entered films at the Marmorhaus in Berlin. Edited medical films. and became co-producer of *Kuhle Wampe* (1932). Left for Austria 1932 and then for Hungary where he produced wrote and directed *Hortobagy*. To England 1937 where he became director of the Academy cinema and, after 1944, its owner. Interned, he produced documentaries for the MoI and two other films: *A Message from Canterbury* (1944) and *Shapes and Forms* (1944). The first was made with Sir Herbert Read with Archbishop Dr. Temple, the second was about primitive and modern art. Director of Film Traders, a distribution company of foreign features and British shorts. 1951 produced *Murder in the Cathedral*.

Oscar Homolka: Actor. B. 12 Aug. 1898, Vienna. D. Jan 27 1978, Sussex. Married: 1. Greta Mosheim (div.) and 4. actress Joan Tetzl (died 1977). He trained at the Drama Academy Vienna and, in Dec. 1918, appeared at Komedienhaus, Vienna. A successful career

on the stage in Graz, Munich, Berlin and Vienna followed and he appeared in a number of Shakespeare plays, Barnowsky's production of *Faust* and contemporary roles, among them in Brecht's play, *Baal* in 1926.

Arrive in England in 1934 and in 1935 appeared in Beverley Nichols's *Mesmer* and then opposite Flora Robson in *Close Quarters*. He had acted for the screen in Germany, for Berthold Viertel in *Die Abenteuer eines Grenzes* (1926) and in *Dreyfus* (1930). His first film in England was *Sabotage* (Gaumont British 1936, dir. Alfred Hitchcock). After another play, *The Power and the Glory* and a couple more films for Gaumont British, he went to USA, where he pursued a successful career on the stage and in films. Returned to England in 1946 for *The Shop at Sly Corner* (Pennant Pictures, dir. George King) and continued to act in American and British films.

Arthur Honegger: Composer. B. 10 March 1892, Le Havre. D. 8 Nov. 1955, Paris. One of Les Six. Swiss origin. Composed for silent films from 1922 as well as scores for sound but only known for one British score in Britain *Pygmalion* (Pascal Film Productions 1938 dir. Leslie Howard and Anthony Asquith). Roberto Rossellini filmed his oratorio *Jeanne au Bucher* in 1954. Appears as actor in *Un Revenant* (1946).

Jacques Ibert: Composer. B. Paris, 1890. D. Paris, 1962. A student of Fauré at Paris Conservatory. Composed operas, symphonies, ballet scores, etc. Briefly in England in 1930s, where he wrote the score for *Love on The Wing* (GPO Film Unit, 1938, dir. Norman McLaren).

Nieczyslaw Izyski: Negative cutter. B. 1901, Poland. Entered film industry in 1924 in Poland. In UK, he was employed by George Humphries and Co. in 1943.

Carl Jaffé (Frank Alwar): Actor. B. 21 March 1902, Hamburg. A long stage career began in Wiesbaden in 1920. Appeared on the stage in Frankfurt, Vienna, and Berlin and on German radio. To England in 1936, appearing on London stage in *Gay's the Word* and other plays. First British film *Over the Moon* (LFP 1939, dir. Thornton Freeland and William K. Howard). In the forces during the war and discharged to work for BBC German Service.

Walter Jentzsch: Editor. B. 1901, Germany. Working as a features editor at Butchers Film Services Ltd. in 1941.

Leopold Jessner: Director, Actor. B. 1878, Königsberg. D. 1945, Hollywood. Eminent stage director and actor in Germany, working first in Hamburg and Königsberg, then as general director of the Staatstheater, Berlin. Few films, but they all reveal his interest in the stage. He co-directed *Die Hintertreppe* (1921), dir. and prod. *Erdegeist* (1923), and co-scripted and supervised *Maria Stuart* (1927). In England he made only one film, *Children of the Fog* (Jesba Films 1937) and went to Hollywood where he was unable to establish himself.

Albert Jullion: Scenic Artist. B. 1910, France. Joined industry in 1926. In England in 1935, employed at Gaumont British Picture Corporation. First film in England *The 39 Steps*

(GB 1935, dir. Alfred Hitchcock).

Alfred Junge: Production designer. B. 29 Jan. 1886, Górlitz, Germany. D. 1964. Studied art in Germany and Italy, afterwards becoming scenic artist at Berlin State Opera and State Theatre Studios. From 1920-28, he worked in German film studios., his first film being *Die Hintertreppe* in 1921 (dir. Leopold Jessner, assisted by Paul Leni) for which Carl Mayer wrote the screenplay and Leni designed the sets. He was designer on *Das Alte Gesetz* (E. A. Dupont, 1923) with Curt Kahle. Slump in the industry in 1928 brought him to England as art director for BIP where he worked on *Moulin Rouge* (1928) and other films dir. by E.A. Dupont). Then to Paramount, Paris and to Berlin at UFA, returning to England in 1932 as art director for GBPC. His first British film of the 1930s was *After the Ball* (GB 1932 dir. Milton Rosmer). Worked with Alfred Hitchcock and Victor Saville on some of their best films of the period. 1938-40 worked for MGM-British, 1939-42 for British National and was production designer for the Archers 1942-47, winning an Oscar for the design of *Black Narcissus* (1947). 1947-57 production designer for MGM-British. Later went to Hollywood.

Helmut Junge: Draughtsman in Art Dept. B. Germany 1921. The son of Alfred Junge, he joined Junge's department as a draughtsman in 1942.

R.Maasz: 3rd Asst. Dir. at Gaumont British. In forces in 1944. No other information.

John H. Kahan: Screen-writer and lecturer. B. Vienna, 1897. Worked on the stage for Max Reinhardt, Leopold Jessner and others and joined UFA, Berlin, where he both wrote and directed. In England from 1937-39 in the casting department at 20th.Century Fox British. His screenplays were few, but he wrote the original story for *I See Ice* (ATP 1938, dir. Anthony Kimmins). He worked at the Mol Films Division from 1940-45 and afterwards lectured on a freelance basis for the British Film Institute, The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and other bodies.

Gisela Kaisen: Animator. B. 1928, Germany. Entered film industry in August 1943 as a trainee animator for Film Traders Ltd.

Hans Kafka (John Kafka): Writer and critic. B. 26 Dec. 1902, Vienna. D. 5 Feb. 1974, Munich. Left Germany in 1933 for Czechoslovakia, then to France where he scripted *Carrefour* (1938) for Kurt Bernhardt and then to UK, where he co-scripted its remake, *Dead Man's Shoes* (ABPC 1939, dir. Thomas Bentley). In 1940, he went to the USA, returning to Germany in 1958.

Susanne Kalmus: Lab. Technician. B. 1925, Austria. In 1944, she took her first job in the film industry, as a technical assistant, grading positives.

Lilly Kann (Lily/ Lili/Louise Kann): Actress. B. 20 Oct. 1893 Peitz, Germany. D. 2 Nov. 1978. Stage actress in Berlin, Dresden, Düsseldorf, and Frankfurt. To England in 1939 where she appeared on stage in Clifford Odets's *Awake and Sing* (1942) and in FDKB cabarets as well as other productions in which she sometimes sang. Entered British films with *Latin Quarter* (British National 1945 dir. Vernon Sewell).

Edith Kanturek: Sound technician. B. Czechoslovakia. In 1940 was working at 20th Century Fox, Lime Grove, as 'Sound Camera Trainee'.

Otto Kanturek: Cine-photographer. B. 27 July 1897, Vienna. D. 1944? in a plane crash. He had worked on over a hundred films for Eclair, UFA, Decla-Bioscop, and Gaumont in Germany and France before coming to England. Much admired technician, associated with Schach and Grune in Britain. First film in UK *The Wrecker* (W & F 1929 dir. Geza von Bolvary).

Karl (Carl) Kayser: Camera Asst. B. Germany. Came to Britain in 1935 or 1936 and was camera assistant to Erwin Hillier at Joe Rock Studios. His application for naturalisation was turned down and he was interned in Australia in 1940, where he remained until after the war.

Count von Keller: Producer. In Britain he owned a travelogue company, *World Windows*, on which Jack Cardiff was camera-man and Christopher Challis was the camera technician, making films in Technicolor. A refugee, von Keller had married an American millionairess who introduced him to the director of Technicolor, Kay Harrison. His films include *The Eternal Fires*, about Vesuvius and Pompei and one on Petra.

William Kellner: Draughtsman in Art Department. B. 1900, Austria. Arrived in Britain in 1936 first opening an architects office, but also turned to television, where he became a set decorator. He applied for British citizenship in 1938, but was interned from July-September, 1940. After a job as a surveyor of bomb-damage, he tried to join the Intelligence Service, but was put on the War Damage Commission. At the end of 1942. became a draughtsman in the Art Department of GB Films at Lime Grove.

Jan Kiepura: Singer. B. Sonowicz, Poland, 6 May 1904. D. 15 Aug. 1966, Harrison, NY. Polish, part Austrian. Known as the 'Polish Caruso'. Married to Martha Eggerth. Intended to study law and attended Warsaw University. Trained at Jurastadium, Warsaw, first appearing at the State Opera House, Warsaw, in *Faust*, in 1925, later at La Scala, Milan and at the Metropolitan Opera House, NY as Rodolpho in *La Boheme*. Also in Operetta. Made five films in England, beginning with *City of Song* (BSFP 1931 dir. Carmine Gallone).

Otto Klement: Producer. B. Mor Ostrava, Czechoslovakia. A celebrated play-broker, publisher and stage producer in Europe. In partnership with the English, ex-diplomat Robert Garrett and produced *A Woman Alone*, 1935.

Edward Knoblock (Knobauch). Actor, playwright, screen-writer. B. 1874, Germany. D. 1945. Naturalized British citizen, he was in England immediately after WW1. A friend of Chaplin, he appeared in *The Idle Class* (1921). His plays were often melodrama, but he also wrote *Kismet*, many of which were filmed after 1921 and the 1920 play *Mumsie* was made into a film by Wilcox in 1927. Among other films in the 1930s, he worked on *Chu Chin Chow*.

Karl Koch: Animator. D. London 1963. Collaborator and husband of Lotte Reiniger. He was co-scr. on *La Marseillaise* and worked on other films by Renoir.

Friedrich (Frederick) Kohner : Writer. B. 25 Sept. 1905, Teplitz-Schöenen. In 1929-30 he was a film correspondent in Hollywood, after which he returned to Germany as a Dreihurhauer in Berlin. He left Germany 1933 for France, the UK in 1936, and then for Hollywood again. In France he wrote *Le Crise est Finie* (1934) and in England he wrote a short film *The Sins of Man* (1936).

Alexander Korda (Sándor László Kellner): Producer and director. B. 16 Sept. 1893, Túrkeve, Hungary. D. 23 Jan. 1956, London. Naturalized British citizen, 1936. Knighted 1943. Married 1. Maria Corda (div.), 2. Merle Oberon (div.), 3. Alexandria Boycon. Career began as a journalist. 1914-19 entered film industry in Hungary directing and writing for Tricolor, Nemzeti, Korona, Corvin, Unió and, after the revolution the Councils' Republic. 1920-22 in Vienna directing for Sascha-Film and Corda Film Consortium-Vita Konzern. 1923-26 in Berlin directing and producing for Korda-Film GmbH, Berlin, UFA-Dreamland Studio, Felsom-UFA, and Deutsches Fox-Decla. 1927 to Hollywood, directing for First National. First FN film *The Stolen Bride* (1927). 1928 to Fox but forced resignation in 1931 took him to Paris where he established an independent company with Steven Pallos and made three films for Paramount and Marcel Pagnol-Paramount Publix Corp. To England in 1931 to make quota films for Paramount British.

First British film *Service for Ladies* (1932). Created LFP Ltd., 1932, for which he produced and directed. Many of the films after the success of *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933) were less successful. Built Denham Studios supported by the Prudential Insurance Company. He entered into distribution arrangement with United Artists in America, becoming a share owning director and entered into a contractual arrangement with Technicolor (UK) in the mid-1930s.

Because of the war *The Thief of Bagdad* had to be finished in Hollywood and Korda remained there from 1941-43, forming Alexander Korda Films, Inc. and involving himself, to some degree, with a number of Korda-UA films. In 1941 he produced and directed *That Hamilton Woman*, for which Churchill had developed a screenplay, whilst also acting as a courier for British SIS – a continuation of a pre-war activity and for which, in combination with Churchill's debt to him for supporting and employing film during the thirties, he was knighted. In 1943 he returned to Britain as head of production MGM-British Productions in association with LFP. A director of London Film Studios, Isleworth Film Studios, Shepperton Film Studios, etc. Continued directing and producing in Britain after the war.

He aided many émigrés in Britain, offering them 'film work' and in Hungary, through agencies like the Red Cross. He is reported to have financed Nijinsky until his death in 1950, by acquiring a script from his wife and employed the Countess Budberg and the Princess de Rohan (for a short while) as story editors.

Vincent Korda (Vincent Kellner): Art director painter. B. 1896, Pusztaturpaszto, Túrkeve, Hungary. D. 4 Jan. 1979.. Naturalized British subject 1938. Served in Austro-

Hungarian army in WWI. Studied painting in Budapest under Bèla Grünwald and at academies in Vienna, Florence and Paris, where he settled. Designed first film with Alfred Junge *Marius* in Paris (Marcel Pagnol- Paramount Publix Corporation 1931, dir. Alexander Korda). First film in England *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (LFP 1933, dir. Alexander Korda). Designed most of the lavish LFP productions, providing one of their major features. 1944, art director MGM-LFP. 1946 production designer with Alexander Korda at recreation of LFP. Along with Junge and Andrejew, one of the major designers in the British film industry of the 1930s.

Zoltan Korda (Zoltán Kellner): Director B. 3 May 1895, Pusztaturpaszto, Túrkeve, Hungary. D. 13 Oct. 1961, Hollywood. Naturalized British Citizen 1938. Married the actress Joan Gardner. An infantry officer in Austro-Hungarian army in WW1, but fell ill with tuberculosis. Entered films in 1914, later working as editor and camera-man with UFA, Berlin. 1918, co-directed first film *Károly Bakák* and subsequently worked as writer and editor and camera-man. Directed only one other before *Die Elf Teufel*, in Berlin 1927. 1930, to Hollywood and then to England. First film in UK, *Cash* (LFP 1933). His most famous films were in colour, for LFP, and located in the tropics or similar places: *Sanders of the River*, *Elephant Boy* (with Robert Flaherty), *The Drum*, etc. He founded Legeran Films in 1939. Hollywood 1940-48. Like Alexander, involved in SIS activities during the war.

Fritz Kortner (Fritz Nathan Kohn): Actor and director. B. 12 May 1892 Vienna. D. 22 July 1970, Munich. Studied at Academie fur Musik und darstellende Kunst, Vienna. Subsequently appeared on stage in Vienna, Berlin, Mannheim and Dresden. 1911, to Deutsches Theater, Berlin. A major interpreter. Entered cinema in 1916 in *Sonnwendfeuer*. 1919, Staatstheater, Berlin under Leopold Jessner. 1919-33, frequent appearances throughout Europe. He appeared in films from 1927 with *Die Auagersteoßenen* and he directed his first film *Der brave Sunder* in 1931. To England in 1934. Away from Germany, he had great difficulty in establishing himself. First film in UK *Chu Chin Chow*, (Gainsborough, 1934, dir. Walter Forde). To USA in 1937 where he wrote two Broadway plays and directed one before going to Hollywood as a screen-writer and character actor. He returned to German theatre in 1948 at the Kammerspiele and Bayerisches Staatstheater Munich, the Hebbeltheater, Berlin and other theatres along with occasional directing in later years.

Ludwika Krakowska: B. 1921, Poland. Entered film industry in late 1943 as a trainee editor and film librarian for the film section of the Polish Ministry of Information.

Günther Krampf (Otto Krampf): Cine-photographer. B. 8 February 1899, Vienna. Naturalized British citizen in 1946. Filmed in Vienna, Berlin and Paris as an assistant camera-man. His first film was as co-photographer on *Die legende von der heiligen Simplicia* (1920 dir. Joe May), was responsible for trick photography in Ludwig Berger's *Cinderella* and was the co-photographer of *Nosferatu* and the photographer of *Pandora's*

Box, and *Kuhle Wampe*. To England 1931 and from 1931-6 was lighting camera-man at GBPC Ltd. and Gainsborough Pictures 1928 Ltd. 1936-8 with Associated British and Criterion. Worked for other companies. He could achieve expressionist effects through lighting, which remained a feature of his work. First film in UK *The Bells* (BSFP 1931 dir. Oscar Werndorff) followed by *The First Mrs Fraser* (Sterling 1932, dir. Sinclair Hill), *Rome Express* (GBPC 1932 dir. Walter Forde) on which he introduced back projection to Britain. Through him, many of the best ideas from the German studios became incorporated at Shepherd's Bush Studios.

Nicholas Krass: Editor. B. 1899, Russia. Entered films in 1933. During the war in England, where he first worked at the Canadian Service Ministry, probably as some kind of technician and later for Wallace Productions Ltd.

Hella Kurty: Actress. Appears in *Hotel Reserve* (1944).

Paul Kuttner: Screen-writer and journalist. B. 20 Sept. 1922. Education at Bryanston College, Dorset. First appeared as a child actor in Fritz Lang's *M* (Nero Films 1931). Educated at Bryanston College. In England, he became a reader for Hutchison 1941-43 and from 1943-46 he was on the executive council of the Scenario and Playwright's Circle. Entered film industry as reader for ABPC and from 1943-5 worked in its scenario department. Back to journalism 1944-47 as political correspondent to a Swiss newspaper. 1947 to Hollywood as reporter for *What's On*, *News Chronicle*, and *London Week*. Wrote original screenplay *Letters from England* (ABPC 1948). Then to Hollywood as screen-writer with Columbia. 1949, attached to US Government branch of Displaced Persons Committee and European Relief Division.

Marta Labarr: Actress. Reputation in Europe. First British film *Invitation to the Dance* (1935). War period in Hollywood. 1946 returned to Britain, appearing in *Teheran* (Pendennis 1947, dir. William Freshman and Giacomo Gentilomo). 1949 on London stage.

Karel Lamac (Karl/Carl Lamac): Director. B. Prague, Czechoslovakia, 27 Jan. 1897. D. 2 Aug 1952, Hamburg. Married the actress Anny Ondra (div.). Father was an opera singer who became a pharmacist. He studied chemistry but entered films shooting *reportage* from the front for newsreel companies. Became an actor in 1918, afterwards becoming assistant producer and then director by 1919. Directed numerous films and associated with Ondra, Martha Eggerth, Jan Kiepura, Danielle Darrieux, and the photographer Otto Heller. Worked in Russia, France, Germany, and England. To England in early thirties and served in the Czech. Air Force as a captain. First film in England *They Met in the Dark* (Independent Producers [Hellman-Excelsior 1943]). Directed in France after the War.

Robert Lantz (Robert Land?): Story editor and screen-writer. B. 20 July 1914, Berlin. Wrote four plays which were produced in Vienna 1934-37 (*L'Inconnue de la Seine* won the Austrian Reich Prize for Literature in 1934). Worked with Curtis Bernhardt, Joe May, Luis Trenker on film stories in Switzerland and Germany. To England 1935. 1937-1942 as reader

for 20th Century-Fox and other American companies. 1942-6 story editor Columbia Pictures. Continued to write plays which include *The Love of a Good Woman* and 1945-47 film and theatre columnist *Leader Magazine*.

Leo Lasko: Director and screen writer. B. 25 July 1885. D. 10 Jan. 1949. Directed from 1921, films for Friedrich Zelnik, Decla, UFA, etc., some of them intensely nationalistic. Lasko, part Jewish, was barred from employment in the film industry and became a *Schwarzwerke*. The gap in his directing career when sound came in meant that he had no opportunity to adapt to it. To UK in 1936 when finally prevented from working but could find no directing work. Although he did a little editing, his career was over. His son, Peter Lasko, briefly in art-direction 1939-40, became an art historian.

Arthur Lassally: Engineer and maker of technical films. B. 19 February 1892, Berlin. After a period in a concentration camp came to England in 1939. He had tried unsuccessfully to set up a company in Britain. The father of Walter Lassally. Finally returned to film making after the war.

Lassgallner, Ivan : Associate producer. B. 1912 Budapest, Hungary. Married daughter of Biro. Until 1936 editor of Hungarian film and theatre magazine. Subsequently sales controller for LFP. 1941 entered production as financial supervisor Columbia-British. 1946 Assistant producer *This Man is Mine* (Columbia-British, prod. dir. Marcel Varnel).

Curt Laurentzsch: Diagram artist. B. 1908, Germany. Entered the film industry in 1942, working for Diagram Films Ltd.

Tamara Lees: Actress. B. 14 Dec. 1925 Vienna. Education at Belgrade and later in England. During war worked in factory and later at American Embassy. Entered film industry in 1947 in *While the Sun Shines* (ABPC International Screenplays, dir. Anthony Asquith). She was contracted to Rank.

Melchior Lengyel: Writer. B. 1880, Hungary. D. Oct. 1974, Hungary. Many stage plays. Career began as a journalist. His first play, *The Mighty Governor* (1907) was followed by more plays and *Typhoon* (1909) brought him international fame. In Switzerland during WW1, he returned to Hungary where he wrote the libretto for Bartok's *The Miraculous Mandarin* which was premiered in Cologne but banned because of its unsavoury content. With Biro, he wrote *The Czarina*, 1912, which became the basis for the Korda film, *Catherine the Great*. Left Hungary for London 1931, where he collaborated on the screenplay of *Catherine* (LFP 1934, dir. Paul Czinner). His play, *Angel*, was produced in London in 1933 and was later turned into an American movie. Later to Hollywood, where he provide the story for *Ninotchka* and collaborated on *To Be or Not to Be*. Returned to Hungary in the late 1960s.

Lore Leni (Lore Leni-Cowan): (née Sello), Screenwriter. B. 2 Dec. 1901, Berlin. Married 1. Paul Leni. 2. Maurice Cowan. Worked on films in Berlin, Hollywood and London, including *Waxworks* and *The Man Who Laughed*. Wrote numerous screen scenarios

and became involved with Wilcox's Imperadio Pictures.

Kurt Lewenhak: Executive. B. 24 Sept. 1921, Vienna. Married: Sheila Macintosh. Worked for Unity Theatre and the London Press Association before joining BBC as a studio manager in 1941. Entered films 1941 as assistant director and screen-writer for Verity with Sidney Box and Henry Cass and wrote scripts for British Council and Realist. Worked as news and features writer European News Service 1942-1943 and then join the RAF. After D-Day he was in Holland, Belgium and Germany. After the war briefly at Radio Hamburg and Radio Luxemburg in 1946 -1947, he worked once more for the BBC, as a sub-editor, this time for the Central News Department of Central News Division. 1946, Films and drama officer at National Coal Board in charge of scripting and production of documentary and instructional films, newsreels and Living Newspapers.

Kate Lewin: Diagram artist. B. Germany 1921. Rendered stateless by the Nazis, she was working at Gaumont British Animation Ltd. in 1945.

Albert Lieven (Abert Fritz Liéven-Lieven): Actor. B. 23 June 1906, Hohenstein, Prussia. D. 22 Dec. 1971, Farnham, Surrey. Attended Königsberg and Berlin Universities and trained at Schauspielhaus Königsberg and, Berlin. Married: 1. actress Tatiana Lieven (div.) 2. actress Petra Peters (div.) 3. actress Valerie White (div.) 4. actress Susan Shaw (div.). Started as a bank clerk, his first significant appearance being at Hoftheater Gera, Thuringia, in 1927 in *As You Like It*. From 1930-32, he acted at the Schauspielhaus Königsberg and at the Staatstheater Berlin. Considerable reputation in the cinema, in which he acted, from 1923-33. A Jewish wife was a major factor in his leaving Germany in 1935, arriving in England in 1937. First film in 1932, *Ich bei Tag und bei Nacht*, and others followed. First appearance on stage in England was as Prince Ernest in *Victoria Regina*, 1937. Became employed as a play reader in New York and London for Gilbert Miller and continued to appear on stage, simultaneous with working for BBC European Overseas Services from 1940. First film in England *Night Train to Munich* (Twentieth Century Fox 1940 dir. Carol Reed) in which he had a bit part. Then *Convoy* (Ealing 1940 dir. Pen Tennyson). A rank contract artist after the war at £3 thousand per year.

Tatiana Lieven: Actress. B. 1910 Leningrad, Russia. D. 1978. Married 1. Albert Lieven (div.) 2. Miles Malleon. Studied for stage at Reinhardt School, Berlin and first appeared on stage as Julie in *Danton* at the Volksbühne, Berlin 1929. Worked throughout Germany and Austria and first appeared in London as understudy for Tamara Geva in *Idiots Delight*, 1938. Many other plays. Engaged in war work 1942-45 and back on the stage in March 1945. Her first film was the multi-lingual *The Two Worlds* (BIP, 1930, dir. E. A. Dupont), but in the UK her first films were small parts in *Jeannie* (Tansa Films, 1941, dir. Harold French), followed by *Yellow Canary* (Imperator 1943 dir. Herbert Wilcox).

Sighurd Lohde (Sidney Loder): Actor. B. Austria. Minor actor mentioned in Pearl's *The Dunerea Scandal*. In England he acted in *Night Train to Munich*, *Neutral Port* and *Sailors*

Three before becoming an official interpreter but was sent 'by accident' aboard the *Dunera* to Australia during internment period. After war appeared in *Eureka Stockade*, but won a lottery and returned to Berlin where he opened a coffee house.

Herbert Lom (Herbert Kuchacevich ze Schluderpacheru): Actor. B. 11 Sept., 1917 Prague. Trained in Prague. Married: Dina Scheu. 1936 (div.). Appeared on stage in Prague, where he organised Student Theater and appeared in a number of films. Holidaying in Ireland at the time of Munich Crisis, he decided not to return. to Czechoslovakia. England in Sept. 1938 where he studied at Old Vic and Westminster Theatre. First film in England *Mein Kampf-My Crimes* (ABPC 1940 dir. Norman Lee). 1940-46 employed by BBC European Section. Appeared as Napoleon in *The Young Mr. Pitt* (Twentieth Century Prods. 1942 dir. Carol Reed). Many other films.

Peter Lorre (Laszlo Löenstein): Actor, director. B. 26 June 1904 Rosenberg, Hungary. D. 23 March 1964, Hollywood, USA. Married: 1. actress Karen Verne (div.) 2. actress Celia Lovovsky (div.) 3. Anna Brenning. Trained for theatre in Vienna, worked in improvised theatre and did bit parts for a company in Breslau, whilst working as a bank clerk. Made his stage debut in Zurich in Galsworthy's *Society*. Worked in Vienna for two years and then went to Berlin. Acted on stage in Switzerland and had a couple of supporting parts in films. Film career started in 1928, before *M* (1931) rocketed him to fame. Appeared in *Die Koffer des Herrn O.F.* (Alexis Granowsky 1931). On stage in Zürich, Vienna, and at Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin. To England, via France in 1934, appearing in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (Gaumont British 1934 dir. Alfred Hitchcock) and then to Hollywood and back to England for *Secret Agent* (Gaumont British 1936 dir. Alfred Hitchcock) where he quickly rose through the Mr. Moto series to become a favourite Hollywood actor. Appeared again in UK after the war both on the stage and in films. He was the star at the Chiswick Empire with an Edgar Allen Poe act with acrobats and singers and in the films *Double Confession* (Harry Reynold 1950 dir. Ken Annakin). 1951, directed *Der Verlorene* in Germany.

Sonja Lubitsch: Company director of Ascot Films Ltd. No other information.

Max Mack: Actor, director. B. 21 Oct. 1884, Halberstadt als Moritz, Myrthenzweig, Germany. D. 18 Feb. 1973, London. He acted in provincial theatre from 1906 and started in films in 1911, writing film scripts for film companies in Berlin. Julius Greenbaum, the father of Mutt, engaged him at the Vitascop where he wrote, produced and acted in several short films. With E. A. Dupont and others he wrote the early film book. *Die zappelnde Leinwand?* (1916) *With a Sigh and a Smile* (London, 1943). He made early use of the close-up and introduced the hidden camera in *Wo ist Colletti?* He introduced the avant-garde film with *Der Andere* (1913) by Lindau, in which Albert Bassermann appeared and, in the same year, he filmed Sudermann's play, *Katzenberg*, Paul Leni's first film as art director. To England, via Prague, in 1933, where he directed *Be Careful Mr. Smith* (Union 1935). He set up a company, Ocean Films Ltd. with Hans Feld and Philip Lindsay to 'remake' D.W. Griffith's

Orphans of the Storm, but quickly ran out of money. Subsequently, he worked in the British Museum library, researching French-Boulevard -Comedies for use in amateur theatre.

Lucie Mannheim: Actress. B. 30 April 1895 near Berlin. D. 28 July 1976 Braunlage, Germany. Married: Marius Goring. Appeared on the stage whilst still at school, in 1916. Her first major part was in 1920, as Kathie in *Old Heidelberg*, then appearing as Annchen in *Jugend* and as Christine in *Liebelei*. Only then did she train for stage at Reichersche Hochschule, Berlin. She was then contracted Hannover, Libau — where she appeared in *Erdegeist* with Conrad Veidt — and, later, in Königsberg under Leopold Jessner and Berlin under the direction of Friedrich Kayssler. An extensive career on the continent, acting with Kortner, Krauss, Bassermann, Homolka, etc. Appeared in films in Paris and Berlin. First film, *Die Austreibung*. To England 1933 and appeared on London stage in 1935 in *Nin*. There followed a successful British theatre career. First film in England *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (Gaumont British 1935 dir. Alfred Hitchcock). During the war she worked for the BBC European Service and after it toured German theatres with her husband.

Arthur Mainzer-Reinholds: Actor. B. 25 Nov. 1895. D. 21 March 1954, Berlin. To UK in 1933. Returned to West Germany in 1951.

Andrew (André) Marton: Director. B. 26 January 1904, Budapest. Film Career began as an editor at Vita Film, Vienna in 1922 for Max Linder. In 1923 he went with Lubitsch to Hollywood, where he edited two of his films and directed his own film, *Two O'Clock in the Morning*, (1929). He continued to work in the USA and in Germany chief editor at Tobis Studios and directed a few films in Germany, the first of which was *Prodigal Son*, but left in 1933, working his way through Switzerland and Hungary before arriving in England in 1936. His first film in England was *Wolf's Clothing* Wainwright 1936). To Hollywood again in 1940, where he directed a number of Hollywood productions.

Meinhart Maur: Actor. B. 1891, Hajdn-Nànàs, (Tiefebene), Hungary. D. 1964. Married the actress Annie Arden. Established actor on European stage and in radio and films, including *Die Koffer des Herrn O.F.* (1931) alongside Peter Lorre. Worked with Max Reinhardt. Known as 'The Man With a Thousand Faces'. To England in thirties, where he worked on stage, radio and in TV, mostly in small parts. First film in England *Rembrandt* (LFP 1936 dir. Alexander Korda).

Hans May: Composer and musical director. B. 11 May 1891 Vienna. D. 31 Dec. 1958. Naturalized British subject. At ten, gave public concerts at the Bösendorfer Saal, Vienna. Attended Academy of Music Vienna and conducted for opera and operetta in Berlin and Cairo. In Berlin he founded the cabaret *Gondel* and arranged and composed music for numerous silent films, including the German *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for which he provided a jazz parody. First to England in 1930 and again in 1933. First film in UK was the bilingual *Flame of Love* (BIP-Richard Eichberg Prods. 1930 dir. Richard Eichberg). Many other films in Britain. Composed music for French films including *La Paradis Perdu* (1938

dir. Abel Gance) in the thirties. His stage music, especially for *Waltz Time*, is well known.

Joe May (Joseph Mandel): Producer/director. B. 7 Nov., 1880, Vienna. D. 1954.

Married to the actress Mia May (Maria Pflieger). He was a business man and a producer of operetta before entering films in 1912. He wrote many of them and his wife appeared in them. In films he directed serials and popular features of the thriller variety and had his own company by 1914. A minor director, he encouraged talent and employed the young Fritz Lang as a script writer and Paul Leni as an art director. Left Germany in 1933 for England and a year later to Hollywood. His work in Britain was minimal, although three films either derive from his stories or are reworkings of his films.

Carl Mayer (Karlchen Mayer): Scriptwriter. B. Nov. 20, 1894 Graz. D. 1 July 1944, London. Father ruined himself by 'scientific gambling' and committed suicide in 1911. Hawked barometers, sketched portraits and acted to support his three brothers. Then became literary manager of Theater Graz and eventually the strongest influence on the literary shape of the silent German cinema working with Wiene, Ruttmann and Murnau. His first film, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* was co-scripted with Hans Janowitz. To USA in 1927 with Murnau but he declined offers to work there and wrote *Sunrise* for Murnau in Europe. In 1932 to England with Paul Czinner and Elisabeth Bergner. Worked with Paul Rotha, Paul Czinner, and Gabriel Pascal, and at Two Cities as a scenario editor, but had only one screen credit in England on Rotha's *The Times*.

Ferdi Mayer (Ferdie Mayne): Actor. 11 March 1916. Married Deirdre de Peyer. German actor with stage, and broadcasting experience. Assistant to Curtis Bernhardt in London in the mid 1930s. Worked for German Service of BBC during the war. Appeared on the English stage in *The Russians*, doubled for Anton Walbrook and appeared in the film *Old Mother Riley Overseas* (British National 1943 dir. Oswald Mitchell) and *Meet Sexton Blake* (British National-Strand 1944 dir. John Harlow).

Andrew L. Mazzei: Art director and sculptor. B. 1898. Worked on Max Reinhardt's *The Miracle*. Much work in Europe. In England worked on the White City exhibitions with Imré Kiralfy. Designed films in England from 1926, *Roses of Picardy* and *Mademoiselle from Armetieres*. Worked for Paramount British, GBPC, and Gainsborough as well as J. H. Studios. His first sound film in England was *Hindle Wakes* (Gainsborough 1931 dir. Victor Saville).

Lazare Meerson: B. 1898, Russia. D. 1938, London. Left Russia for Germany after the revolution. Entered films in 1922. Paris from 1924-36. He painted the frescoes of the Casino, Monte Carlo. He became the leading designer of films in France, working with Jacques Feyder on *Gribiche* (1925) and others and affiliating with René Clair after 1926, working on *Sous les Toits de Paris* (1930), *Le Million* (1931), and *A Nous la Liberté* (1931). To England in 1936. First film in UK, *As You Like It* (Inter-Allied, 1936, dir. Paul Czinner).

Rudolph Meinert: Actor, director. B. 29 Sept. 1882, Vienna. D. 1945, England. In films

since 1910. 1933 to Austria and then to UK.

Lothar Mendes: B. 19 May 1884, Berlin. D. 25 Feb. 1974. Married the actress Dorothy Mackaill (div.). Naturalized American citizen. Acted on stage direct from school but trained at Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater, Berlin and at Burg Theater, Vienna. Acted at Deutsches Theater in Berlin and at the Burg and Volksbühne, Vienna. Appeared in films but soon became a director for UFA, directing Austrian and German films. First film as director, *Der Abenteuer* (1921). He met the producer Robert T. Kane, the producer of First National Pictures, Hollywood who signed him to direct *The Prince of Tempters* in 1926 and he went to USA. He worked for Paramount Pictures and for MGM. To England from 1933-37, where he was director of Pall Mall and directed three films, beginning with *Jew Süss* (GB 1934). Then back to USA, but he returned again to produce documentaries at the Film Producers Guild.

Laszlo Meitner: B. Hungary, 1900. In 1936 was working at LFP as an art director.

Paul Metzberg: Screen-writer. In England associated with Fred Zelnik, possibly in an early form of *The Stars Look Down*.

Ernö Metzner: Director and art director. B. 25 Feb. 1892, Austria-Hungary. D. 25 Sept. 1953, Hollywood. Studied at the High School of Arts and Crafts, Budapest and the Academy of Arts, Budapest. Initially a painter and illustrator in Budapest and Berlin, he became an assistant art director in 1920 with Ernst Lubitsch's Berlin company. He co-directed and designed *Salome* (1922) and directed a number of films between 1926 and 1929, including *Freie Fahrt* (1928) and *Überfall* (1929). The first was a propaganda film for the Social Democratic Party, the second non-political and experimental. From 1926-33, he designed seven films for G. W. Pabst. To England in 1933. First film in UK, *Chu Chin Chow* (Gainsborough 1934, dir. Walter Forde) but he worked little after 1936 and went to USA.

Ernst H. Meyer (Peter Baker): Composer, musicologist and sound effects expert. B. 8 Dec. 1905, Berlin. D. 17 Oct. 1988, Berlin, GDR. Supported his musical Education by playing piano in pubs and, in 1930, took his Ph. D. at Heidelberg University. To England 1933. Worked as music journalist, composer, teacher, and lecturer for the WEA and London University and, in 1946, published the important book, *English Chamber Music: The History of a Great Art from the Middle Ages to Purcell*. He was one of the promoters of the FDKB. Entered films in 1937, through an introduction to Cavalcanti from Eisler, in music department of GPO Film Unit. Pioneer in use of special sound effects which originated in natural sounds and were carefully researched and created a method of incorporating natural sounds into the musical score. First films *Roadways* and *North Sea* (GPO Film Unit). Many others including films for Len Lye and Halas and Batchelor. 1948, offered University post in East Germany.

Pierre Michaux: Sound camera operator. B. 1919, France. Entered film industry in 1944 as a trainee sound camera operator for Gainsborough Pictures at Lime Grove Studios.

Darius Milhaud: Composer. B. 4 Sept. 1899, Aix-en-Provence. D. 22 June 1974.

Briefly in UK in 1930s, en route to America, where he wrote music for *The Islanders* (GPO Film Unit).

Martin Rudolf Miller (Muller): Actor. B. Kremsier, Czechoslovakia, 2 Sept. 1899. Married Hanne Norbert, who became a continuity announcer with the German section of BBC in 1948. Education at Vienna and Prague. Made first stage appearance in Vienna 1921. Produced for the stage from 1928 and acted in Poland, Germany and Austria until 1938. In 1939, appeared at the Jewish Culture Theatre, Berlin and in March 1939 came to London where he founded the Little Viennese Theatre in June 1939. He became director of Lantern Theatre and acted at the Arts and other theatres from 1942. Entered films with *Let George Do It* (Ealing Studios 1940 dir. Marcel Varnel).

Gustav Aurel Mindszenty: B. Austria, 1894. In films since 1918 as a draughtsman in the art department. In 1936 he was working for LFP.

Conrad von Mollo (Kurt von Molo): Editor. Worked for Criterion. Worked in Rome and Berlin during the war. Edited US newsreels in Munich afterwards and subsequently directed

Peter Morley: Television and film producer. B. 1924 and entered the film industry in 1940, writing, editing, directing. Joined the Film Producers Guild, 1947. Worked on *Bound to Last*, *One Man and His Job*, *Version 699*, *Foundry Practice*, etc. In Jan. 1956, joined Associated Rediffusion as director, making live commercials and advertising magazines. Many documentaries for television.

Renate Müller: Actress. B. 1907. D. 1937 (suicide). Daughter of the editor of the *Munchner Zeitung* and trained at Max Reinhardt's school. A leading, popular stage actress in Germany, she entered films in 1928 with *Peter, der Matrose* (1929). She acted in *Sunshine Susie* (Gainsborough 1931 dir. Victor Saville) and *Marry Me* (1932) in Britain.

Leo Mittler: Originally a stage director in Germany. 1936, joined ATP.

László Moholy-Nagy: Artist film maker. Shortage of means prevented him from filming until 1926, although his film manuscript, *Dynamic of the Metropolis*, which he prepared with Karl Koch in 1921-2 anticipated Ruttmann's *Berlin*. His films were mostly shorts. *Lightplay* (1931) and *ABC in Sound* (1932) for example. Supervisor of special effects for *Things to Come* (LFP 1936 dir. Lothar Mendes), although only 1.5 minutes survived into the final film. Experimented at GPO Film Unit. and also with colour. Made a short realist film *Lobsters* (1935) for Korda.

Maurice Moiseiwitsh: Screen-writer, journalist, novelist and producer. B. 1914 Odessa. Educated at London University. His novels include *Souvarin*. First film work was adapting his radio series *Mr. Penny* as *Meet Mr. Penny* (British National 1938 dir. David Macdonald). 1945, with Eric Warman, created the series *Book of the Film*.

F.I. Neuenberg: Camera Asst. B. 1912, Germany. Became stateless during Nazi period. Entered films in England in 1943 at Gaumont British Screen Services, as a general assistant

in camera department.

Sergei Nolbandov (Nolbandoff): Director, associate producer, screen-writer. B. 1895, Moscow, Russia. D. 1971. Graduated in Law from University of Moscow. Career began as a editor of silent pictures, coming to Britain in 1926. Worked as a clerical assistant to Ivor Montagu at Brunel and Montagu Ltd. in the late twenties. 1933 production supervisor at ASFI Ltd., and production manager Gloria Swanson British Productions Ltd., Warner Bros. and at GB. During war at Ealing but he also monitored Russian broadcasts for the BBC and worked in the Films Division of MoI. 1946-7, producer *This Modern Age* for Rank. 1947-9, producer of documentaries for *This Modern Age* (Rank).

Theodore Obolensky: B. 1920. Editor. A British subject in 1936, working at BIP, Elstree as assistant editor.

Olaf Olsen: Actor. B. 24 Jan. 1919, Heildeberg. On the stage and in the cinema in Berlin. To England in 1936. Numerous radio broadcasts and acted in the first full-length televised production of *Journey's End* (1937). First film in England *Sixty Glorious Years* (Imperator 1938 dir. Herbert Wilcox). Invalided out of British army during war. Appeared on the London stage in *Jeannie* and *Judgement Day* and on TV after 1946. On the radio, he often appeared as a continental villain in the Dick Barton and Paul Temple series.

Orest Orloff: Actor. B. 24 Sept. 1919 St. Petersburg, Russia. Education in Malta, France and Switzerland. To England 1937 where he studied under Michel St. Denis. First London stage appearance in 1940. First film *Talk About Jacqueline* (Excelsior 1942 dir. Harold French). In 1946 formed Chelsea Films with Anthony Mendlesohn, an independent film company to produce short features on art and theatre subjects.

Stephen Osiecki: Director and editor. B. 1903, Poland. Naturalized British subject in 1950. Entered film industry in 1930 and was employed in the film section of the Polish Ministry of Information during the war.

Richard Oswald (Richard Ornstein): B. 5 Nov. 1880, Vienna. D. Sept. 1963, Düsseldorf. Originally an actor who trained at Dramatische Hochschule, Vienna and producing for the stage at Jarno theatres in Vienna by 1898. By 1914, he was directing and producing at Union Film, Berlin and in 1916 he founded Oswald-Film and opened a first-run cinema. During 1920s famous as producer of *Aufklärungsfilme*. Produced and directed 155 films in Europe. He was forced out of Germany in 1933 for France, England, where he directed the financial failure *My Song Goes Round the World* (BIP 1934), and went to Hollywood in 1938, directing unremarkable films. Later directed for television.

Steven Pallos: Producer. B. 31 Aug. 1902, Budapest. A journalist before entering films in 1923, where he began producing and distributing in France and elsewhere. Associated with Alexander Korda at LFP for 15 years. 1939-45 in HM Forces as head of Dept. of Psychological Warfare, British Films Division, Italy. After war formed Pendennis with John Stafford. and Man. dir. of Omnia Films Ltd., Pax Films Ltd. and other companies. First film

for Pendennis *Teheran* in 1947.

Lilli Palmer (Lillie Marie Peiser): Actress and novelist. B. 24 May, 1914 Posen. D. 27 January 1986. Sister of the actress Irène Prador. Married: 1. 1943, the actor Rex Harrison (div.) 2. the actor Carlos Thompson. Daughter of the Austrian actress Rosa (Rose) Lissmann. Light comedy and romantic actress. Trained for the stage in Berlin making her first appearances at Rose Theater Berlin in 1932. To England in 1935 after appearing in cabaret in Paris, at the Moulin Rouge and the Monte Christo. First film in UK *Crime Unlimited* (WB-FN 1935 dir. Ralph Ince) and became contracted to Gaumont British. 1938, made her first appearance on London stage in *The Road to Gandahar*. Many other stage and screen appearances.

Gabriel Pascal (Gabriel Lehöl): Director and producer. B. 4 June 1894 Arad, Transylvania. D. 6 July 1954, New York. Naturalized British subject 1939. Studied agriculture at Hungarian National Economy College, switching to acting. Minor career at Volksbühne, Vienna, but was in films by 1914 when he appeared and assisted in the production of an Urban Gad film with Asta Nielsen. In WW1 a Lt. in Austro-Hungarian Hussars. He briefly returned to acting before becoming successively, an exporter of films from Germany, a director for Pascal Film Prods. in Rome, France, Germany, including *Frederika*. He tried Hollywood in the early thirties, but finished up in England. First film in England *Reasonable Doubt* (Pascal Film Prods. 1936 dir. George King), a quota film. He became tied to Paramount for quota productions. 1938 Formed production unit with Leslie Howard to make films in Hollywood and London and he had an interest in Greenhill Laboratory. His extravagances led to *Caesar and Cleopatra*, the cost of which was put variously between £800 000 and £1.3000 000, the film which effectively ended his career, although he produced *Androcles and the Lion* in the USA a year prior to his death.

Georges Périnal: Cinematographer. B. 1897 Paris, France. D. 23 April 1965, London. Entered film industry 1913 as projectionist, then assistant camera-man, graduating to lighting camera-man on silent films for Pathé. After WW1 he freelanced on industrial films and documentaries and in 1925 he moved into features. Director of photography for René Clair's early sound films, starting with *Sous les Toits de Paris* (1930). Korda, who had worked with him in Paris, brought him to England under contract in 1933 for *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (LFP 1933 dir. Alexander Korda). Korda wanted to take him to Hollywood in 1940, but ASC refused him permission. Remained in Britain during war and worked with the Archers and others.

Franz F. Planer (Frank F. Planer): Cine-photographer. B. 29 March 1894 Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia. D. 10 Jan. 1963. Hollywood, USA. Naturalized American citizen. Studied art under Hermann Wagner but switched and trained as a portrait photographer at Pietzner in Vienna. He began working for Éclair, under Pommer and, after 1920, for Emelka and UFA. First film was *Der Todesritt am Riesenrad* (1912) at Geiseltal Studios. Worked in

Germany, France and, in 1934, for Sacha Company, Vienna. To England in 1934. In 1935, he went to Italy and in 1936 he was in both France and England. To Hollywood in 1937 with a contract with Columbia. Frequently worked with Max Ophuls. First film in England was the bi-lingual *The Unfinished Symphony* (Cine-Allianz 1934 dir. Anthony Asquith and Willi Forst). His only other films in England were *The Dictator* (Toeplitz Prods. 1935 dir. Victor Saville and Alfred Santell) and the bi-lingual *The Beloved Vagabond* (Toeplitz Prods. 1939 dir. Kurt Bernhardt).

Eric Pohlmann: Actor. B. 18 July 1913, Vienna. D. 25 July, 1979, Bad Reichenhall, Germany. To England in 1938, returning to Germany in 1948. Naturalized British Citizen. He was a member of BBC German and Austrian Service, a Programme Assistant, German Section, 1943 -1948. After the war he worked in a POW camp, where he led an amateur group in a short-version of John Galsworthy's *Strife*.

Erich Pommer: Producer. B. 20 July 1889, Hildesheim. D. 8 May 1966, Hollywood. The most important producer in German cinema. 1907-1914 worked for Gaumont Co. in Berlin, represented Éclair Co. in Central Europe. 1915, formed the production company Decla (= Deutsche Éclair) in Berlin which was later merged with Bioscop to become Decla-Bioscop and taken over in 1923 by UFA, the board of which he joined as head of production and head of foreign department. In 1922, he persuaded Fritz Lang to direct the Dr. Mabuse films. To Hollywood 1926-27 as production manager to Famous Players-Lasky (Hollywood), at Paramount and at MGM and then back to Berlin in 1927 as Head of Production at UFA. 1933 to Paris as director of Fox-Europe, where he produced a number of films, including Ophuls's *On a volé un homme* in 1933 and Lang's *Liliom* in 1934. To Hollywood again in 1934 and, in 1937, to England as producer of Pendennis Picture Corp. With Charles Laughton created Mayflower Pictures. 1940, to Hollywood again as producer for Paramount and RKO. 1946, returned to Germany as 'Films Officer' in American zone and in 1950 founded Intercontinental GmbH. 1956 back to Hollywood.

Rolf Popp: Technical adviser, director. B. 1912, Norway. Had directed his own films in Scandinavia. In 1942, was employed as a technical adviser.

Irène Prador: Actress and singer. B. 16 July 1919, Vienna, the sister of Lilli and Hilde Palmer. Her career in radio, films, and cabaret began in Paris. In London from 1937. She made her first appearance in television in 1938, her stage début in Herbert Farjeon's *Nine Sharp*. Began in cabaret in Paris with her sister Lilli and played a few tiny parts in films before the war.

Arnold Pressburger: Producer. B. 27 Aug. 1885, Hungary. D. 17 Feb. 1951, Hamburg. Naturalized American citizen. Entered film industry in 1909 in Austria and, in 1918, founded Sascha Films in Vienna. 1925, in Berlin, he began producing, founding Cine-Alliance Films. In 1930 began making German and English bilinguals for distribution by GB in Britain. First was *City of Song* (BSFP 1931 dir. Carmine Gallone), the first large scale British sound film.

1934, founded British Cine-Alliance Films and produced with Korda *The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel* (LFP-BC-A, 1937 dir. Hans Schwartz). 1937, began to produce films in Paris. 1940 to Hollywood. and formed Arnold Productions to release through United Artists. 1949 returned to London to produce for Two Cities. His son, F. Pressburger, was also in film production.

Emeric Pressburger: Producer, screen-writer, and director. B. 5 Dec. 1902, Miskolc, Hungary. D. Feb. 1988. Naturalized British citizen, Sept. 1946. Education at Universities of Prague and Stuttgart. He began as a journalist and started in film industry in Berlin, although he also worked in Austria. First film *Abschied* was co-scripted, as were a number of his early films. Left Germany for France in 1934 and to England 1935. First British film *The Challenge* (LFP-Denham Films 1938 Dir. Milton Rosmer). Introduced to Michael Powell on *The Spy in Black*, after which they continued to work together, forming The Archers in 1942 which produced films normally funded by Rank or Korda. The writing was by Pressburger, rewritten by Powell. Production was predominantly by Pressburger, and the direction was solely by Powell. When the partnership ended his films without Powell were failures and he took to novels with modest success.

Gregory Ratoff: Director. B. 20 April 1897, Petrograd, Russia. D. 1960. Trained in business studies and later drama at University of St. Petersburg. A soldier in the Czar's army, he became an actor with the Moscow Arts Theatre. To USA and appeared extensively on New York Stage in Yiddish Theatre, producing, directing and acting on Broadway, prior to going to Hollywood as an actor, cast usually in parts with a thick accent, first appearing in *Symphony of Life* (1931). 1934 to England to act in *Forbidden Territory* (Progress Pictures 1934 dir. Phil Rosen). Then began directing. After a further period in Hollywood, writing and directing, he returned to England after the war to produce and direct *That Dangerous Age* (LFP 1949) and others.

Karol Rathaus (Leonhard Bruno): Composer. B. 16 Sept. 1895, Tarnopol, Galicia. D. 21 Nov. 1954, New York. Worked with Weill and Brecht in Germany. To England 1933 where he worked on a couple of films the first of which was *The Dictator* (Toeplitz Prods. 1935 dir. Alfred Santell). 1938, to USA where he became Naturalized. Something of a sound theorist, whose own works were widely performed. He tended to use strong rhythms to build a symphonic score and with his early work in Germany, especially, he was able to compose before the shooting, by studying the script and discussing it with the director.

Hans Rehfisch (José Joseph Rehfisch): Writer with many pseudonyms George Turner; Sydney Phillips; René Kestner). B. 10 April 1891, Berlin. D. 9 June 1960, Schuls. He was director of the Central-Theater, working with Erwin Piscator. His plays were among those most frequently performed during the Weimar period, writing *Nickel und die 36 Gerechten*/Nickel and the 36 Just Men, *Duell am Lido*, *Razzia*, *Der Frauenarzt* *The Gynecologist*, *Die Affäre Dreyfus*, and *Wer weint um Juckenack?*/Who Weeps for

Juckenack?. He was arrested by the Nazis in 1933 and on his release in 1936, left Germany for Austria, France, and then England, returning to Germany in 1950. Interned in 1940, on Isle of Man, he produced a modern dress version of *Julius Cæsar* at the Gaiety Theatre, Douglas. In Britain he worked for the BBC and was closely associated with the Club 43. 1945, he went to the USA, where he taught the directors course as Piscator's Dramatic Workshop. He wrote the novel on which *Guilty Melody* (Franco-London Films 1936 dir. Richard Pottier) was based and his plays were produced again in Germany after the war.

Anna Reiner: credited on *The Dawn Guard* (Charter 1941 dir. Roy Boulting). No other information.

Erwin Reiner: Screen-writer and literary consultant. B. 12 July, 1897, Vienna. Education at University of Vienna. Entered film industry in 1920, as assistant to Alexander Korda at Sascha Studios, Vienna and later in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Rome, Prague, as author, editor and producer. In 1938, whilst working at Star Film GmbH., Vienna, he left for England, where he worked for Two Cities as literary consultant. First Film in UK as co-writer on *The World Owes Me a Living* (British National 1945 dir. Vernon Sewell) but working in other capacities before then.

Lotte Reiniger: Director, creator with Dr. Hans Cauerlis, of the silhouette film. B. 21. June 1899, Berlin Germany. D. 19 July 1981, Barnet, north London. Married the producer, director Carl Koch. Studied briefly with Max Reinhardt in 1916-17. 1918 entered film industry, cutting the title vignettes for Paul Wegener's *Pied Piper of Hamelin*. 1919, Wegener introduced her to the Institute of Cultural Research and she began a series of silhouette films. 1919-20, first film *Das Ornament des verliebten Herzens* (The Ornament of the Loving Heart). 1926, after a series of shorts, completes the first full-length animated feature in history of cinema, *Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed*, financed by the banker Louis Hagen. She worked with Arthur Neher, Walter Ruttmann, Alexander Kardan, Berthold Bartosch, and her husband. In Paris, it ran for six months at Louis Jouvet's Champs Elysées Theatre. To England in 1936, where she worked for the GPO Film Unit and, later for Crown Film Unit. 1937 contributed a shadow play to Jean Renoir's *La Marseillaise*. At outbreak of WWII she and Koch were in Italy working on the subsequently abandoned *Elisir d'Amour* based on Donizetti's opera and they were obliged to return to Germany, where she worked on *The Golden Goose*. 1945 to Berlin and in 1948 to London again where her later films were financed by Louis Hagen (Jnr.)

Walter Reisch: Screen-writer, director. B. 23 May 1903, Vienna. Entered films as an assistant to Alexander Korda in 1920 and contributed many screenplays for Austrian and German productions before leaving Germany in 1933 for Austria and then for England before going to Hollywood in 1937. In Britain he supplied the story for the bi-lingual *The Unfinished Symphony* (Cine-Allianz 1934 dir. Anthony Asquith and Willi Forst) and he provided the story and directed *Men Are Not Gods* (LFP 1936).

Harry Reubin: Property master. B. 1890, Russia. In industry since 1908. In 1943 was employed at Merton Park Studios as asst. art director in property department.

Frederick (Friedrich) Richter: Actor. B. 1894. Czechoslovakia. Married Amy Frank. A stage actor in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia since 1920. Appeared in films in Prague and Vienna. To England in mid-1930s. Employed by BBC European Service. First film in UK *Squadron Leader X* (RKO-Radio 1942 dir. Lance Comfort). Returned to Germany after the war.

Walter (Walther) Rilla: Actor, stage and radio producer. B. 22 Aug. 1894, Neunkirchen, Saarbrücken, Germany. D. 21 Nov. 1980, Rosenheim, Germany. Education at Universities of Königsberg, Bonn, Breslau, and Lausanne in philosophy and psychiatry. Initially a journalist and editor who turned to acting in 1923, later to producing in Berlin. Father of the director Wolf Rilla. Many films in Germany and France from 1924. To England 1934. First film in England *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (LFP 1934 dir. Harold Young). 1939-45 employed at BBC as producer for European Service and producer and writer-director in Features and Drama, whilst continuing to act in films. After war continued to act and direct for the stage and directed a religious documentary film, *Behold the Man* (1951) as well as a number of television programmes.

Françoise Rosay (Françoise Bandy de Nalèche): Actress. B. 19 April 1891, Paris. D. 1974. Married Jacques Feyder. Trained at Conservatoire National de Déclamation, Paris, first appearing on stage in 1908. Initially looked for an operatic and stage career but temporarily retired after her marriage in 1917, reappearing as a screen actress and appearing in a number of important films. Her first film part was in *Falstaff* (1917) but is famous for her roles in *La Kermesse Heroïque* (1935) and *Un Carnet de Bal* (1937). To England 1940. First film in UK *The Halfway House* (Ealing 1944 dir. Basil Dearden). To France again after the war but returned to England for films at Ealing and Gainsborough.

Miklós Rózsa: Composer. B. 18 April 1907 Budapest, Hungary. Education at Leipzig Conservatory. Then to Paris and Berlin. Something of a childhood prodigy violinist, he wrote a ballet in his twenties as well as numerous concert works which were conducted by Dohnányi, Munch, Walter, and Boehm. To England 1935, where he composed ballet music for Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin. Became Korda's composer. First film in UK *Thunder in the City* (Atlantic Film Productions 1937 dir. Jacques Feyder). Went to Hollywood with Korda in 1941 to complete *The Thief of Bagdad* and remained to become an important film composer with Billy Wilder, Alfred Hitchcock, King Vidor, etc.

Peter Sachs: Animator. B. 19 Sept. 1912 Allenstein, Germany. D. 30. Dec., 1990, London. Educated in Berlin. Joined film industry 1932 in Berlin, working on cartoons with George Pal. 1934-38 worked in Holland as studio manager at George Pal Studios. Then to England, where he was interned in 1940. At W.M. Larkins Cartoon Unit from 1941-54. On many animation and documentary films for Larkins-Film Producers' Guild including: *In Grampa's Day*, *Tfor Teacher*, *Wie*

Moet Tat Betaalan, River of Steel, and Enterprise.

Leontine Sagan:(Leontine Schlesinger): Actress, Producer, director. B. Vienna 1895 (or 1899). D. 1974. Married: Victor Fleischer. Education at Vienna and Johannesburg. Studied for stage under Max Reinhardt in Berlin and appeared on stage in Dresden, Vienna, Berlin and Frankfurt where she began producing. Her film career was small — only two films before the war, but began in Germany with *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931). Film in UK *Men of Tomorrow* (LFP 1932). Her first London stage production was *Children in Uniform* (Duchess), followed by Ivor Novello's *Glamorous Night* and the Eric Maschwitz/Bernard Grun show *Balalaika* (1936). Subsequently, many others, mostly in South Africa, where she was from 1939-45. After the war she co-directed *Gaiety George* (Embassy 1946) with George King.

Max Schach (r.n. Max Schacherl): Producer. B. 2 May 1886, Zenta, Hungary. Lived in Vienna. D. 3 Aug. 1957, London. Naturalized British Citizen, 1952. He was, for twelve years, a film and theatre critic for Berliner Tagblatt. Began producing around 1918 and was closely associated with Karl Grune. Joined UFA in 1920 as a scenario editor and then became an independent producer. He became general manager for Universal in Europe and general manager of Emelka, a state owned studio, running four studios, a distributing and an exhibition company. He was forced to resign in December 1931 and came to England via France in 1934. His first UK production was a co-prod. with BIP, *Abdul the Damned* (BIP-Capitol 1935). He set up a number of companies under the Capitol umbrella, including Cecil, Trafalgar, Buckingham, and Max Schach Productions. Capitol failed and he resigned from all the companies, retiring initially to Bournemouth with his wife and Grune.

Frederick Schiller: Actor. B. 23 Aug. 1901 Vienna. Naturalized British subject. Studied under Max Reinhardt. Long experience on Viennese stage until 1938 when he went to live in Jersey. During war in British army until 1943, when he was invalided out. Acted on London stage and in radio drama with *Thunder Rock, The Interned* etc. First film in UK *Mr. Emmanuel* (Two Cities 1944 dir. Harold French).

Gerik Schjelderup: Actor. B. 27 Nov. 1899. The son of the Norwegian composer Gerhard Schjelderup. Married the actress Natalie Moya. Education at University of Oslo and studied painting in Oslo, Munich, and Paris. Toured Australasia with his wife, she acting and he painting. Acted on London stage and one of the creators of the Torch Theatre. Also worked in radio specialising in story-reading and poetry. Appeared in *The Silver Fleet* (The Archers 1943 dir. Vernon Sewell)

Joseph Schmidt: Singer. B. 4 March 1904, Dadiney, Rumania. D. 16 Nov. 1942 , Gyrenbad, in internment in Switzerland. Known as the 'pocket Caruso', sometimes as the 'German Caruso'. Built a substantial reputation on the radio and on disc. Driven out of Germany, he sang in Vienna, New York and made two films in England, the first of which was *My Song Goes Round the World* (BIP 1934, dir. Richard Oswald). His height prevented

him ever becoming popular on the screen. At the outbreak of war, he was in Belgium and managed to escape, via France, to Switzerland, where he was interned, fell ill and died.

Hans Schneeberger: Cine-photographer. B. 7 June 1895, Brandberg im Zillertal (Tyrol). Studied architecture and went to Arnold Fank's Freiburger Kammerschule. Acted in *Das Wunder des Schneeschuhs* and then worked as photographer, with others, on *Der Berg des Schicksals*. He was the photographer of a number of Fank's mountain and sports films and also worked for Leni Riefenstahl. Photographer on innumerable films in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. He worked on *Wunder des Schneeschuhs* (1922) and *Das blaue Licht* (1932). To England for a short while in mid thirties, where he photographed the non-studio parts of *Farewell Again* (Pendennis Pictures 1937 dir. Tim Whelan). After the war he worked in Germany.

Kurt Schroeder: Musical director. Opera conductor. Associated with Alexander Korda at the beginning of LFP. On continent, he composed the score for *Stambul* (1932). In 1933, music dir. for *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (LFP dir. Alexander Korda)

Eugen Schufftan (Eugen Schuftan, Eugène Schuftan): Cine-photographer, technical supervisor. B. 21 July 1893, Breslau. D. 6 Sept., 1977, NYC, USA. Studied architecture, painting, sculpture, and design. Became cartoonist after WW1. Always interested in effects, he entered cinema around 1920 and made them his speciality. Worked throughout Europe and at Universal in America and created the 'Schufftan Process' in 1923 which was used for the first time in *Metropolis* (1927). The same year he filmed his first feature, *Königin Louise*. 1933 to France. Briefly to England in 1935 but he also worked in France. 1939 to Hollywood where he was only able to find work with great difficulty. 1947 becomes Naturalized American citizen. After 1949 he worked internationally, beginning in France. His work is characterised by its dark contrasts, often skipping over the half tones without any sense of bleaching out. In England in the 1930s on *The Robber Symphony* (Concordia 1936 dir. Friedrich Fcher) and two others.

Hugo Schuster: Actor. Well known European actor on stage and in films. Actor and assistant dir. at Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater Berlin. To England 1937, appearing on London stage and in films. He sometimes voiced for the dubbing of films. Appeared in *English Without Tears* (Two Cities 1944 dir. Harold French).

Hans Schwartz: Director. A refugee from Germany, he made first, *Prince of Arcadia* (Nettlefold-Fogwell 1933) and *The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel* (LFP-British Cine Alliance 1937). Brunel, its producer claims to have helped sort out the mess on the latter.

Matyas (György) Seiber: Composer. B. 4 May 1905, Budapest. D. 24 Sept. 1960, Kruger National Park, South Africa. Naturalized British subject. Married: Lilla Bauer. Education at Royal Academy of Music, Budapest and Budapest Academy of Music. He went to Frankfurt in 1926, joined a ship's orchestra as a cellist and travelled to North and South America. He was back in Frankfurt in 1928 where he conducted and played 'cello and

pioneered the teaching of jazz. In 1933 left for Budapest and travelled via Russia to England in 1935, where he finally settled in Caterham, Surrey. He taught at Morley College and composed for the BBC, sometimes under a *nom de plume* for lighter music. Incorporated jazzy scores into films. First film score *Paper People Land* (Cyril Jenkins 1939 dir. Cyril Jenkins), a short with paper cut-out marionettes. He specialised in providing scores for documentaries and cartoons and worked as composer and musical director for many Halas-Batchelor Cartoon Films and for the feature length cartoon, *Animal Farm*.

Michael Seligman: Production manager. B. 1927, Germany. Made stateless by the Nazis. Entered film industry in 1944 as Asst. technician on titles and printing at British Paramount News, later editor, unit manager and production manager and business manager of Anglia TV.

Feliks Sergeijak: Scenic artist in films since 1929. After the war worked on films such as *The Blue Lagoon*, *The Red Shoes*, *The Third Man*, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

Paul Sheriff (Paul Shouvalov): Designer. B. 1903, Moscow, Russia. D. 1965, London. To England when young and studied architecture in Oxford, entering films in 1935 as assistant to Lazare Meerson and Andrejew, becoming an art director in 1939. Also worked on continent. As art director at Two Cities, he was responsible for some of the best films of the war period, including *French Without Tears*, *The Demi-Paradise* (1943) and *Henry V* (1944). He designed for the London stage and became a supervising art director, working with Carmen Dillon.

Kurt Siodmak: Director, writer. B. 10 Aug. 1902, Dresden. Education at University of Zurich. The younger brother of Robert Siodmak. Worked as an engineer, a reporter and a popular novelist in Berlin and then as a co-scriptwriter, with Billy Wilder on Robert Siodmak's *Menschen am Sonntag* (1929). Many other scripts in Germany before Hitler. He left Germany in 1933 for France, then to UK, and finally to Hollywood. He provided the story for *FPI Doesn't Answer* and *The Tunnel* which were made as tri-linguals and worked, uncredited, on the script of *The Ghoul* in Britain.

Jan Sikorsky: Cameraman. B. 1914 Poland. Entered film industry in 1931. In UK during the war at the Polish Ministry of Information but working at Denham Labs.

Victor Skutezky: Producer, director, screenwriter. B. 1893, Brno, Czechoslovakia. D. 1981, London. Naturalized British subject 1948. Worked in his father's weaving factory before leaving for Berlin and entering the film business in 1922. He was assistant dir. to E.A. Dupont and to Lupu Pick before producing more than twenty films at UFA. A 'non-Aryan', he left Germany in 1933 and worked as a screenwriter, playwright, and producer in Paris, Vienna, Budapest, and Prague. In England he survived with the help of the refugee organisations and taught himself English until the agent Al. Parker helped his career. He worked at Pinewood for a while and, again through Al. Parker, met Robert Clark of ABPC, where he worked until 1960, writing and producing for ABPC. Often encouraged writers, eg.

Lee Thompson, to become directors.

Henry R. Sokal: D. 7 March 1979. Married: the actress Charlotte Kerr. Produced the films of Arnold Fanck and Leni Riefenstahl *White Hell of Pitz Palu* and *Avalanche*. Supervisor of *Dusty Ermine* (J.H. Productions 1936 dir. Bernard Vorhaus). No other information on work in UK.

Josef Somlo: Executive producer. B. 5 Oct. 1884 Hungary. D. 29 Nov. 1973, Locarno. Naturalized British Citizen. Studied law in Hungary before entering film industry in 1908. Head of Projectograph Film A. G. in Vienna, a distribution company, later Nordisk Film Co., Vienna. In 1919, he became Overseas director of UFA in Berlin. Formed own production unit in 1922 with Hermann Fellner, which became Felson-Film der UFA in 1924. To England, via Vienna and Paris, in 1935, where he established Somlo Films Ltd. Formed production partnership with Victor Saville and first film in UK *Storm in a Teacup* (Victor Saville Prods.-LFP 1937 dir. Victor Saville and Ian Dalrymple). He was associated with Fanfare Pictures and joined with Rank, C.M. Woolf and Richard Norton to film Gilbert and Sullivan operas in 1938. 1946, he joined Two Cities as assistant managing director, when Sascha Galperson left and became joint managing director the following year.

Magda Sonja: Actress. B. Czechoslovakia. Married to Friedrich Feher. Appeared in many films which Feher directed in Germany and in *The Robber Symphony* (Concordia 1936, dir. Feher).

Paul Soskin: Producer and director. B. 1905 Kerch, Southern Russia. Educated at Univ. of London and studied architectural styles on continent. Entered film industry as an art director and in 1931 became art director of British European Film Corporation. 1935 formed Soskin Productions with his brother Simon H. Soskin [who was associated with Amalgamated Studios Ltd. formed in 1935] and produced first UK film *Ten Minute Alibi* (British Lion and Transatlantic Film Corp. 1935 dir. Bernard Vorhaus). 1943-44 in America for Conqueror Prods. of which he was managing director and executive producer. After the war was also associated with Two Cities, producing and co-writing *The Weaker Sex* (1948).

Theodor Sparkuhl: Cine-photographer. B. 7 October 1894, Hannover. D. 1945. Trained at Lyceum II, Hannover and otherwise Education at at Universities of Goettingen and Bonn. 1911, became a salesman of projectors with Léon Gaumont in Berlin. 1912 started as a newsreel cameraman for Gaumont and filmed in Russia and Middle East in WW1 as well as getting involved in surgery with the Red Cross in Constantinople and being decorated for outstanding operations. First studio job with Elko Film, Berlin in 1913. First film as co-photographer *Die Augen der Mimie Ma*. 1918-23 worked as a cameraman for Lubitsch and then for UFA until 1928, when he joined BIP in London. 1930 to Paris at Braunberger-Richebe and to film Renoir's *La Chienne* after which he went to Hollywood and in 1933, he joined Paramount. Retired in 1946.

Sam Spiegel (S.P. Eagle): Producer. B. 11 Nov. 1901 Jaroslau, Austria (now Poland). D.

31 Dec. 1885. Worked in Palestine in a youth organisation, returned to Vienna and again to Palestine, where he became a cotton broker, which took him via Europe to New York, USA and entered films in 1927 in Hollywood as a story translator. In legal difficulties he was deported to Poland in 1929 but by 1930 was in Berlin re-cutting and dubbing French and German versions of Universal films for European distribution, including *All Quiet On the Western Front*. Left Germany for Vienna 1933, where he produced *Invisible Opponents*, directed by Rudolph Katscher with Peter Lorre and Oscar Homolka and photographed by Eugen Schufftan. To Paris in 1935 and then to England where he produced *The Invader* (British and Continental 1936 dir. Adrian Brunel) but was deported. For many years in Hollywood he used the pseudonym S. P. Eagle but returned to his real name when he began to produce major box-office hits in the fifties.

Mischa Spoliansky: Composer. B. 28 Dec. 1898 Bialystok, Russia. D. 28 June 1985, London. Pseud. include: Arno Billing, Toni Galento, Chris Kelly, S. Polly. Naturalized German, (denaturalized by Nazis), and British subject 1946. Wrote music in Berlin for the Reinhardt cabaret Schall und Rauch 1920-1923 and for a number of Max Reinhardt stage productions as well as for the show *Es Liegt in der Luft*. Composed cabaret and light music and contributed songs and themes to many films including *Auf Wiedersehen* for one of Oscar Fischinger's short pieces. Scores for *Zwei Krawatten* (1930), *Der Schlemihl* (1931) and other films after sound. Entered films in England with the score for the German made *Tell Me Tonight* (GB - Cine-Alhambra 1932 dir. Anatol Litvak). To England via Vienna and Paris in 1933 working on *The Lucky Number* (Gainsborough, dir. Anthony Asquith, 1933). He became closely associated with Alexander Korda, for whom he composed *Sanders of the River* and others. Composed for BBC, especially for the Foreign Service during the war. Subsequently many films often for Marcel Hellman and scores for television after the war.

Jan Stallich: B. 1905, Czechoslovakia. Chief cameraman at ATP in mid-1930s.

Günther (von) Stapenhorst: Producer. B. 28 June 1883, Gebweiler (Elsass). D. 2 February 1976. From 1909-19, he was a naval officer. In 1925 he set up IFCO (International Film Company) with Arthur Ziem and made four films, the first was *Ich hatt' einen Kameraden*, the second had original music by Friedrich Holländer. The company collapsed and Ziem disappeared to America. Became a production manager at UFA, graduating to become one of the three production heads. In 1935 he took advantage of an offer from Stoll to leave Germany but nothing happened and only associate produced three films in Britain. Created Carlton Films and was filming in Paris in 1939, when he was cut off by the war and he left for Switzerland where he became co-owner of, and producer for, Gloria Films, Zurich, making films in Swiss dialect and sometimes in French, but he made no films between 1942 and 1949. 1945, returned to Munich, where he became Chief of Production at Geiseltasteig in 1946. In 1949, he started producing again with Carlton Films.

Paul Ludwig Stein: Director. B. 1 Feb 1892, Vienna. D. 1951. Married actress Olga

Devrient. Naturalized British Citizen. First went to USA at age 18 years, working as a stage manager on Broadway whilst script writing for various East Coast film companies. Back in Europe he acted on stage in Berlin and Vienna. Entered films at the same time and started directing with *Dr Teufel der Liebe*, which he also produced, in 1919. 1922, joined UFA as director and made a number of films before going to Hollywood in 1926. His speciality was romantic or domestic drama and comedy-drama, but he also made thrillers. UK 1932, where he remained after the war. First film in UK *Lily Christine* (Paramount British 1932). He was associated with Richard Tauber, directing one of his greatest successes *Blossom Time* in 1933. He was a director of Margate Picture House Ltd.

Karel (Karl) Stepanek: Actor. B. 29 Oct. 1899 Brno, Czechoslovakia. D. Jan. 1981, London. Married: the actress Wanda Rotha (div). First stage appearance in Brno, 1920. Then to Vienna 1921-3 and from 1923-7 he toured German provinces and then appeared on stage in Berlin. Various other engagements in Berlin and Vienna. Entered films in Vienna in 1921 and appeared in over fifty Continental pictures, including *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1931). He left Germany in 1939 for Italy, came to England in Jan. 1940 and joined the BBC as political commentator with its foreign service, working for it again during the 1950s. Appeared on London stage in 1941 in a revival of *Close Quarters* and many others. First British film *Secret Mission* (IP-Excelsior 1942 dir. Harold French).

Eric Stockl: Sound maintenance engineer. B. 1928, Austria. Entered films as a trainee in the sound maintenance department of Gainsborough Pictures (1928) Ltd. in 1944.

Walter Stokvis: Editor. Worked at Capitol Film Corp. in 1936 on *The Marriage of Corbal* (dir. Karl Grune). Sometimes misnamed as E. Stokvis.

Alex Strasser: Cine-photographer and director. B. 1899, Austria. D. 1974. Trained at UFA and worked on *Faust* (1926) but specialised in documentaries and short film subjects. Joined Gasparcolour in UK as director-cameraman where he made many informational films. In England, he taught at the Reimann School of Photography, London, and as studio lighting cameraman for Realist Film Unit in 1941. Joined the Pioneer Corps during the war.

Annie Strasser: Asst. Editor. B. 1899. Austria. Nationality revoked by the Nazis. Entered the film business in 1928 but left it again in 1932. In England she took up part-time assistant film editing with Public Relations Films Ltd., London, W1.

Joe Strassner (John F. Strassner): Costume designer. B. 1898, Charlottenburg. D. New York. Began his career at theatres in Munich and then in Berlin, where, in 1930, he opened a salon at the Kurfurstendamm. In Germany, he worked on many prestigious films of the 1930s including *Kongreß tanst*, *Ariane*, *Ihre Majestät die Liebe*. Designed costumes for many films in Britain during the thirties and opened his own fashion house near Grosvenor Square. Went to USA.

Peter Straussfield: Originally a costume designer, who designed, also, the Academy Cinema black and white posters. He was interned in 1940.

Wolfgang Suschitzky: Cine-photographer. B. 1912, Vienna. Father of the cine-photographer, Peter Suschitzky. The son of a socialist bookseller. To England in 1933 where he was an early photo-journalist, working for *Illustrated*, etc. His first film opportunities came through an introduction from Basil Wright to Paul Rotha who used him on a zoo film. Entered films again in 1941 and established himself as a documentary film maker during the war and entered features afterwards. His first film as a cameraman was *Life Begins Again* (Ministry of Information 1943 dir. Donald Alexander).

Paul (Pál) Tabori: Contract screen writer for LFP.

Arthur Taksen: Set dresser. B. France, 1907. He was working in France prior to the war and, in England, was working for RKO British Productions, Denham Studios in 1942.

Richard Tauber: Singer. B. 16 May 1893, Linz. D. 8 Jan. 1948, London. Married: Diana Napier. Career began as a conductor. Appeared on stage from 1912 as a *Lieder* singer and in German language films before coming to England in 1934. First film *Das lockende Ziel* (1930), which he also produced. First film in UK *Blossom Time* (BIP 1934 dir. Paul Stein). Appearances on British stage and for BBC, sometimes as a conductor.

Vilem Tausky: Composer. B. Poland. Composed music for *Seven Years* (Crown Film Unit)

Joseph Than: Writer, director, producer. Left Germany 1933 first for Austria and then to England. In 1937 he went to Paris and then to Hollywood.

Franciszka Themerson: Experimental film-maker. B. 28 June 1907, Varsovie. Studied piano but turned to painting, studying at the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Illustrated childrens' books and turned to film-making, making her first film with her husband Stefan, *Apteka* (The Chemist) in 1930. To London in 1938.

Stefan Themerson: Experimental film-maker. B. 25 Jan. 1910, Plock. Studied architecture at University of Varsovie and at the Polytechnic. Apart from his work with Franciszka Themerson, he turned to writing novels and poetry.

Wilhelm Thiele (William Thiele, Willhelm Isersohn): Director, writer. B. 10 May 1890, Vienna. D. 7 Sept. 1975, Los Angeles. Trained at Vienna Conservatory, he made his acting debut at age 19 in *Merchant of Venice* and soon started directing. In 1923, directed and co scripted first film *Marchen aus Alt-Wien* in Austria and by 1926 was at UFA, Berlin, as a writer. He continued to work in Paris and Germany until 1932. Then to England, where he directed the bi-lingual *Marry Me* (Gainsborough 1932) and *Waltz Time* (Gaumont British 1933). Went to Hollywood to direct routine pictures and after the war returned to Germany.

Ernst Toch: Composer. B. 7 Dec. 1887, Vienna. D. 1 Oct. 1964. Studied medicine and philosophy at University. A self taught musician, he became a pianist, taught by Willi Renber, in Frankfurt. In Frankfurt he taught in Zuscchmeid Hochschule für Musik, Mannheim. To England in 1933 where he worked on three films in 1933 4, the first of which was *Catherine the Great* (LFP 1934, dir. Paul Czinner). In 1935 to USA to teach

composition at New School for Social Research, NY, before moving on to Los Angeles.

Ludovico Toeplitz (Count Ludovico Toeplitz de Grand Ry): Producer. B. Genoa 1893. Prior to coming to UK was managing director of the Genoese Terni Electricity Board and producer for Cine-Pattaluga. Associated with Korda for *Henry VIII*. Formed Ludovico Toeplitz Ltd. in May 1934. Its first production, in 1935, *The Dictator*, was directed, mostly, by Victor Saville. He had a brother who was also a director of the company.

Akos Tolnay: Writer producer. Working for Premier Stafford Productions in 1936. Began to co-write *The Amateur Gentleman* for Criterion but Criterion reneged and Tolnay, successfully, took them to court. Created his own company, Atlantic Film Productions, which produced *Thunder in the City* (1937 dir. Marion Gering)

Victor Trivas: Art director, scriptwriter, director. B. 1896 Russia. D. 12 April 1970, New York. Began as writer and designer in Germany on *Aufbruch des Blutes* (1929) and writer of *Der Mörder Dimitri Karamasoff*. He was art director for G.W. Pabst working on e.g. *The Loves of Jeanne Ney*. 1931 co-wrote and directed *Niemandland* and in 1933 left Germany for Paris where he worked on the unfulfilled adaptation of Victor Hugo's *1793*. Directed *Dans la Rue* (1933) and produced scripts for Granowsky etc. In 1936, it was announced that he was coming to England contracted to Capitol Film Productions, but he made nothing and he was in France as late as 1939. Went to Hollywood during the war where he continued to write films like *The Song of Russia* and *The Stranger*, for Orson Welles. Returned to Germany at some point after the war and wrote and directed *Nackte und der Satan* (1959).

Eugene Tuscherer: Director. Hungarian. Director of Victoria Films (1935). Produced for Garrett Klement Pictures. Brother in Law to Curtis Bernhardt and produced *Carrefour* (BUP 1938) in France.

Meier Tzelniker: Actor. B. 1 Jan. 1894, Hotin-Bassarabia. Naturalized British subject. Studied at College of Dramatic Art, Odessa. 1911 acted at the Masuri Theatre, Charkov, under Alexei Stoikin. Formed his own company in 1921 which performed plays by Chekov, Gogol, Andreiev, and Tolstoy. Toured Europe, South Africa, America. First film in UK, *Mr. Emmanuel* (Two Cities 1944 dir. Harold French). Played Shylock for the first time in Yiddish in 1947.

Ernst Ullman: Actor. Appears in *Hotel Reserve* (1944)

Ladislao Vajda (László Vajda): Director. B. 18 Aug. 1908, Budapest, D. 25 March 1965. The son of screenwriter Ladislaus Vajda. Entered Hungarian cinema as a teenager, cutter, cameraman, eventually directing. Worked in the production side of the industry in Germany and Italy. Technical director at Amalgamated Films Association Ltd. and co-director of *Where is This Lady?* (Amalgamated Films Association Ltd. co-dir. W. Victor Hanbury) in 1933. 1935, back to Hungary and in 1937 back to UK to direct *The Wife of General Ling* (Premier-Stafford 1937). Back to Continent the same year. He directed two Italian films in 1941 in Spain and settled there for a while, directing commercial films. After

WWII, he directed again in England, starting in 1947, as associate director on *The Call of the Blood* (Pendennis 1948). He made more films in Spain, Germany and Switzerland.

Frederick Valk (Fritz): Actor. B. 1901, Germany as a Czechoslovakian citizen. D. 23 July 1956, England. Naturalized British citizen. Married: Diana Quirk. On stage in Czechoslovakia and Germany at Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg at the age of 14. From 1924-28, he worked at Staatstheater, Berlin, where his reputation developed. He returned to Czechoslovakia in 1932, appearing at the New Theatre and left in 1938 for England. First appearance on London stage in *Alien Corn* and in 1939 as Kurtz in *Thunder Rock*. Joined the Old Vic Company on tour and many other stage appearances. Worked also for the BBC Foreign Service during the war. First film *Gasbags* (Gainsborough 1940 dir. Marcel Varnel).

E. Van Duyn: 1933 General Manager at Associated Sound Film Industries Ltd.

Jan Van Loewen: Actor. B. 1901. Early career as an opera singer on continent. First film in Italy, 1928. Many French and Italian films. To England in 1938. First film in UK *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*. Later became a literary agent.

Marcel Varnel: Director. B. 16 Oct., 1894, Paris, France. D. 1947. Education at College Chaptal and Charterhouse, London. Naturalized British citizen. He studied for the stage at the Paris Conservatoire of Dramatic Art and became a stage actor and director in Paris. To USA 1925 to appear on and direct for the New York stage. By 1931 he was directing for Fox. To England 1934. First film in UK *Freedom of the Seas* (BIP 1934). Noted for his 'typical' British comedies with Will Hay and George Formby. His films with Will Hay are among the most admired films of British comedy. He also produced for the London stage and worked for the BBC.

Conrad Veidt: Actor. B. 22 Jan 1893, Potsdam, Berlin. D. 3 April 1943, Hollywood, USA. Married 1. the actress Gussy Hall 2. Felicitas Radke 3. Lily He was given work by Max Reinhardt and appeared on the stage of the *Deutsches Theater* in Berlin prior to the outbreak of WW1. At the front 1915 where he fell ill with jaundice and Lucie Mannheim invited him into her front-line theatre. In 1916 he was able to arrange a transfer to Berlin and appear again at the Deutsches Theatre. 1917, appeared in his first film, directed by Richard Oswald. He then appeared in a number of *Aufklärungsfilm* (sex-Education films) and *Sittenfilm* (films with moral themes). Numerous roles, often as an obsessive figure led to great success, although his popularity waned in mid-twenties. 1922, dir. prod./acted in *Lord Byron*. To Hollywood in 1926 and, in 1929, back to Germany and again to Hollywood. Invited to London for his first UK film *Rome Express* (Gaumont British 1932 dir. Walter Forde) and *The Wandering Jew* (Twickenham 1933 dir. Maurice Elvey). Returned briefly to Germany for *Wilhelm Tell* and returned to England for *Jew Süss*. Acted, again for Richard Oswald, 1938, in Paris. To Hollywood in 1940.

Gisela Veress zu Dálvok: B. 1919, Austria. Entered films in Britain in 1943 working for Halas and Batchelor Cartoon Films as a tracer.

Eric Verlin (Wurmfeld): Asst. Editor. B. 1906. Czechoslovakia. Worked as a photographer before entering film industry in 1944 as an asst. editor at the Czech Ministry of the Foreign Office.

Berthold Viertel: Director, poet, dramatist. B. 28 June 1885, Vienna. D. 24 Sept. 1953, Austria. Married: the screen-writer Salka Steuermann (div.). Studied philosophy at University of Vienna. Became an actor, then literary manager and director for theatres in Vienna, Dresden, Munich, and Berlin. Worked for Max Reinhardt. Translated dramas, and contributor to cabarets like *Die Fackel* and *Simplizissimus*. 1922, made his first film, *Ein Puppenheim* and in 1923 directed an adaptation of Ibsen's *Nora*. Also, in 1923, founded the *avant-garde* theatre group, *Die Truppe*. 1926 directed *Die Abenteuer eines Zehnmarkscheins* in collaboration with Bela Bálász and Karl Freund. 1929 Hollywood, directing for Fox. He collaborated on scripts for Murnau's *Four Devils* (1929) and *City Girl* (1930) in Hollywood. 1931 directed for Paramount. In 1933 came to England for GB and directed *The Little Friend*, his first film in UK. Active in the FDKB but in 1940 his residency was not renewed and he went to USA, where he and his wife became the centre of considerable cultural activity amongst the émigrés. 1945 back to Europe as guest producer in Berlin and as director of Burgtheater, Vienna.

Fritz Arno Wagner: Cine-photographer. B. 5 Dec. 1889, Schmiedefeld am Rennsteig. D. 1958 in car crash. Took commercial studies at University of Leipzig but went to Paris in 1910 and joined Pathé as a clerk. Became a newsreel cameraman working in New York for Pathé. Returned to Berlin 1919 and joined Decla-Bioscop as a feature cameraman and became a major cine-photographer, working with Lang and Murnau. Shot *Glamorous Night* (ABP, 1935 dir. Brian Desmond Hurst) in London.

Anton Walbrook (Adolf Anton Wilhelm Wohlbrück): Actor. B. 19 Nov. 1900, Vienna. D. 9 Aug. 1967. He was the son of a famous clown. Trained for stage in Vienna and acted in Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Dusseldorf. Film debut in 1921, in the serial *Stuart Webbs* and then in *Mata Dolorosa*. After 1933 he tried first for a career in Hollywood and then to England. Naturalized British subject 1947. First film in UK *Victoria the Great* (Imperator 1937 dir. Herbert Wilcox). 1939, first appeared on London stage in *Design for Living* and in 1942 he began a two year run in *Watch on the Rhine*.

Edith Wedell: Lab. Technician. B. 1914, Germany. Entered film business in 1942 as an operator in the track printing department of Technicolor Ltd., Harmondsworth.

Franz (Frank) Wehmayer: Cine-Photographer. Photographer on *Calling the Tune* and *The House of the Spaniard* (Phoenix Films-Independent Film Producers 1936 dir. Reginald Denham).

Fritz (Friedrich Fred) Weiss: Director and editor. B. 21 Aug. 1904, Vienna. Studied for stage at Vienna Burgtheater. Acted and made first film appearance in 1925, starring in a number of silent films. Became a director at Sascha in Vienna of films *Vagabonds* and *Gypsy*

for example. To England in 1935 working predominantly in documentaries. 1939-45 worked as editor for companies like Strand, Spectator, and Realist, sometimes as an assistant editor. 1946, directed series of shorts for Ariston. There was talk of him editing *Corridor of Mirrors*, with Anton Walbrook in the cast, but nothing happened for either of them. In 1947, he began directing, editing and producing for Fama Films Ltd.

Harry Weiss: Laboratory chemical adviser. B. 1906, Germany. Weiss had graduated, probably in chemistry. Entered film business in England in 1935 and, in 1937, was employed by British Chemicolour Process, Ltd.

Jiri Weiss: Director and screen-writer. B. 29 March, 1913, Prague. Studied law at Charles University for Journalism but won an award at Venice for a 16mm documentary, *People in The Sun* and turned to film. Directed films in Prague. To England via Paris after the German occupation in 1939. Directed and wrote documentaries. First films in UK *The Rape of Czechoslovakia*, 1939, *Eternal Prague* (1941), *John Smith Wakes Up* (Pioneer 1942) and *Before the Raid* (Crown Film Unit 1943). 1943-45 directed with the Crown Film Unit. 1947 to Prague to direct features but his career declined in the Sixties.

Hans Wengraf: Actor. Small-time character actor, appears in *Sailors Three* (Ealing Studios, 1943, dir. Walter Forde).

Frederick (Fritz) R. Wendhausen: Actor, director, and writer. B. 7 Aug. 1890 Germany. D. 2 Jan. 1962, Germany. Naturalized British citizen. Produced in many theatres in Germany and, for many years, at Max Reinhardt's Theatre in Berlin. First appeared in films as a silent film actor. Then a scenario writer and director for UFA, Tobis, Mondial, etc. in Berlin, London and Vienna. Films include *Family Parade*, *Marius*, and *Peer Gynt*. To England 1937 where he acted and produced. During war and after, with European Service of BBC, for which he produced and worked on BBC assignments in Berlin. Films include *The First of the Few* (Melbourne, British Aviation 1942 dir. Leslie Howard). Returned to Germany in the 1950s.

Eugène Werner: Newsreel camera-man. B. Poland. Entered film industry in 1937, probably in France. In England, he worked at OFIC Frencz, at the Ministry of Information and in 1945 at Pathé Gazette.

Oscar Friedrich Werndorff (Otto Werndorff, Oscar Friederich Werndorf): Designer and art director. B. 1887, Vienna. D. 7 Nov., 1938, London. Naturalized British subject. Initially studied architecture. His career began in 1913 in Vienna and from 1921 he worked in Berlin for UFA and other companies. In 1925, he designed E.A. Dupont's *Variété* (1925), which had an impact as far as Hollywood. He worked for Pabst, Korda, Oswald, and Wiene in Germany. 1928, brought to England by Michael Balcon to Gainsborough Studios and later to GB. First film in UK was *The Wrecker* (W & F 1929 dir. Geza von Bolvary). 1930 Art director at ASFI Ltd. for whom he co-directed *The Bells*, and later at Denham. He was designer on the films of Hitchcock, Victor Saville, and Berthold Viertel in England.

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Hans (John) E. Wengraf: Actor, theatre director. Born Vienna 1897. D. 4 May 1974, Santa Barbara. Small-time character actor, appears in *Convoy* (Ealing 1940, dir. Sergei Nolbandov) and *Sailors Three* (Ealing Studios, 1943, dir. Walter Forde). To Hollywood where he appeared in many films, including *Mission to Moscow*, *The Razors Edge*, *Call Me Madam*, *Judgement of Nuremberg*, and *Ship of Fools*.

Frederick (Fritz) R. Wendhausen: Actor, director, and writer. B. 7 Aug. 1890 Germany. D. 2 Jan. 1962, Germany. Naturalized British citizen. Produced in many theatres in Germany and, for many years, at Max Reinhardt's Theatre in Berlin. First appeared in films as a silent film actor. Then a scenario writer and director for UFA, Tobis, Mondial, etc. in Berlin, London and Vienna. Films include *Family Parade*, *Marius*, and *Peer Gynt*. To England 1937 where he acted and produced. During war and after, with European Service of BBC, for which he produced and worked on BBC assignments in Berlin. Films include *The First of the Few* (Melbourne, British Aviation 1942 dir. Leslie Howard). Returned to Germany in the 1950s.

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when still young. Then to England in 1924 where he became an editor at Warner Brothers. 1937, he helped form Two Cities. In September 1938 he was prevented from making a film in Italy on the grounds that Two Cities had a Jewish board of management. First film in UK, *Thirteen Men and a Gun* (1938). After the war he directed successful 'British' comedies. Man. dir. Anglofilm Ltd., and Transocean Films Ltd.

Marianne Zeisel: Animation-tracer. B. 1925, Austria. Entered film industry in 1944 at Anson-Dyer Analysis Films.

Alfred Zeisler: Director/producer. B. 26 Sept. 1897 Chicago. Sometime married to the actress Lien Deyers. Worked as an actor and as a stage producer until, in 1921, he became a scenario writer in Berlin. He was 5th. Assistant to Fritz Lang on *Der Müde Tod* and, in 1923, began directing shorts. By 1924 he was a producer and a director for UFA and became one of the three heads of Production at UFA studios (with Pommer and Stapenhorst) Berlin, where he made the equivalent of nearly forty B-pictures. To London in 1935. First film in UK *The Amazing Quest of Ernest Bliss* (Garrett-Klement 1936). At Standard International Pictures Ltd. in 1937, where he made *Make Up*.

Fred Zelnik (Friedrich Zelnik): Producer, director. B. 17 May, 1885, Tschernowitz, Roumania. D. 27 Nov. 1950, London. Naturalized British subject. Education at in law at University of Vienna. Became actor, director, and producer for the stage in Vienna and Berlin. 1926, formed own production company, Stern Film, in Berlin. 1928 to Hollywood and in 1929 to London, where he made *The Red Circle* (although this title does not appear in Gifford) with a most synchronised score by Edmund Meisel. He then returned to Hollywood and returned to England in 1932 and formed his own production company. First film in UK *Happy* (BIP 1933) which he directed and produced. 1935, both he and his wife (Lyra Mara) had their German citizenship revoked. 1938-9, he produced two films in Holland and wanted to make others with Bernaur as writer. 1944 formed Fred Zelnik productions in association with British National and produced, first, *Give Me the Stars* (British National 1944 dir. Maclean Rogers). 1948, producing in association with Joseph Janni.

Zuckmayer, Carl: Playwright, poet, screen-writer. B. 27 Nov. 1896, Nackenheim in Rheinhessen, Germany. D. 18 Jan., Visp (Wallis) 1977. Fought in WWI and then studied law at university of Heidelberg. He turned to editing a literary journal, dealing in cocaine, singing his poems in cabaret and eventually to theatre in Berlin and Kiel. Established himself as a lyric poet and turned to writing plays finding success with *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick*, which he also co-wrote twice for the screen in 1931 and 1956. Collaborated on script of Sternberg's *Der blaue Engel* (1930). After 1933 his works were banned in Germany. He moved to Henndorf, Austria but came to England to write the screenplay for *Rembrandt* (LFP 1936 dir. Alexander Korda) and travelled in Scandinavia as well as throughout Europe. After the Anschluß in 1938, he left for Paris and then for the USA where he continued to work. 1946, returned to Europe and became a Swiss citizen.